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SIR FRANCIS DARRELL.

VOL. I.

**Printed by A. and R. Spottiswoode,
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SIR FRANCIS DARRELL;

OR

THE VORTEX:

A Novel.

By R. C. DALLAS, Esq.

AUTHOR OF PERCIVAL, AUBREY, MORLAND,
&c. &c.

E i rimorsi, e il pentire, e il pianger, nulla
Fia che mi vaglia? ALFIERI.

The gathering number, as it moves along,
Involves a vast involuntary throng;
Who, gently drawn, and struggling less and less,
Roll in her vortex, and her power confess. POPE.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1820.



PREFACE.

IN again appearing before the public as a Novel-Writer, after an interval of many years, it will, I trust, be pardonable to say a few words on the object I have adopted on resuming my pen.

The first Novel I published was written in the early part of the French Revolution: in that my object was to vindicate Nature, and clear it from the absurd doctrines in which the fatal philosophy of that period had involved it. The reception which my attempt met with was highly gratifying to my feelings. The object of my present essay is not only to expose vice and folly, but to

counteract the impiety and blasphemy which disgrace the age. With my new story, I have dared to connect the subject of Religion. I hope that I have done it in such a manner, as not to give offence, even to those who may think a Novel no proper vehicle for subjects of so solemn a nature.

I beg leave further to say, that I have taken the opportunity of proving, that when, a few years since, I advocated the cause of men sincerely devoting themselves to Religion in the Roman Catholic Faith, I was guided solely by a spirit of toleration, or rather by a desire to ward off the blow which was aimed at them by an intolerant spirit. This Novel will show that I am not a Roman Catholic; but I should be very ill-understood by the reader, who should imagine that I had abandoned the sentiment of *complete* toleration to his Majesty's Catholic subjects.

I think it right to acknowledge that the first letter of the Novel was not written by me. It was written and given to me, some years ago, by a friend, for the purpose of inducing me to continue it. Conscious that I could not keep up the spirit which it broached, I owned my inability ; and the letter lay, among other papers, in my desk, till last Christmas, when, on the request of my family, to write another Novel, I reperused it, and conceived the idea of adapting it to the object I have stated. I hope I have made so good a use of it, that if it ever meets the eye of the writer, he will be induced to read to the end of the work, and to overlook its defects, in consideration of its tendency.

St. Adresse,
April 6. 1820. }

SIR FRANCIS DARRELL;

OR

THE VORTEX.

LETTER I.

Sir Francis Darrell to the Hon. Lewis Vernon.

Bramblebear Hall.

So much for your present pursuits — I will now resume the subject of my last. How I wish you were upon the spot! Your taste for the ridiculous would be fully gratified, and, if you felt inclined for more serious amusement, there is no “lack of argument.”

Within the last week our guests have been doubled in number. — Some of them

my old acquaintance — our host you already know — absurd as ever, but rather duller; and I should conceive very troublesome to such of his very good friends as find his house more agreeable than its owner. I confine myself to observation and do not find him at all in the way — Veramore and Rivers are of a different opinion. The former in particular imparts to me many pathetic complaints on the want of opportunities (nothing else being wanted to the success of the said Veramore) created by the fractious and but ill-concealed jealousy of poor Bramblebear, whose Penelope seems to have as many suitors as her name-sake, and, for aught I can see to the contrary, with as much prospect of carrying the point. In the meantime I look on and laugh; or rather I should laugh were you present to share in it — Sackcloth and sorrow are excellent wear for soliloquy, but for a laugh there should be two, and not many more — except at the first night of a modern tragedy.

You are very much mistaken in the design you impute to myself. I have

none, here or elsewhere. I agree with you that the world as well as yourself are of a different opinion — I shall never be at the trouble to undeceive it — my follies have seldom been of my own seeking — “Rebellion came in my way and I found it.” This may appear as coxcomical a speech as Veramore could make — yet you partly know its truth. You talk to me too of “my character,” and yet it is one which you and fifty others have been struggling for years to obtain for yourselves. I wish you had it ; you would make so much *better*, that is, *worse* use of it, relieve me, and gratify an ambition which is unworthy of a man of sense.

It has always appeared to me extraordinary that you should value women so highly, and yet love them so little. The height of your gratification ceases with its accomplishment — you bow, and you sigh, and you worship and abandon. For my part, I regard them as a very beautiful but inferior animal : I think them as much out of their place at our tables as they would be in our senates. The whole present system with regard to that sex is a rem-

nant of the chivalrous barbarism of our ancestors. I look upon them as grown-up children: but like a foolish mamma I pet some *only* one. With a contempt for the race I am ever pleased with the individual in spite of myself. You know that, though not rude, I am inattentive, — any thing but a “beau garçon.” — I would not hand a woman out of her carriage, but I would leap into a river after her. — However, I grant you that as they must walk oftener out of chariots than into the Thames, you gentlemen servitors, cortejos and cícisbei have a better chance of being agreeable and useful. *You* might probably do both, but as you can't swim and I can, I recommend you to invite me to your first water-party.

Ramblebear's Lady Penelope puzzles me — she is beautiful, but not one of my beauties. You know I admire a different complexion; but the figure is perfect. She is accomplished, if her mother and music-master may be believed; amiable, if a soft voice and a sweet smile could make her so; young, even by the register of her baptism; pious and chaste

and doating on her husband, according to Bramblebear's observation ; equally loving *not* of her husband though rather less pious, and *t'other thing*, according to Veramore's ; and according to mine she detests the one, despises the other, and loves —— herself. That she dislikes Bramblebear is evident — poor soul ! I can't blame her — she has found him out to be mighty weak and little-tempered. She has also discovered that she married too early to know what she liked, and that there are many likeable people who would have been less discordant and more creditable partners. Still she conducts herself well, and in point of good humour, to admiration. A good deal of religion — not enthusiasm, for that leads the contrary way, — a prying husband who never leaves her, and, as I think, a very temperate pulse, will keep her out of scrapes. I am glad of it ; first, because though Bramblebear is bad, I don't think Veramore much better ; and next, because Bramblebear is ridiculous enough already, and it would only be thrown away upon him, to make him more so :

thirdly, it would be a pity, because nobody would *pity* him; and fourthly, as Scrub says, he would then become a melancholy and sentimental harlequin, instead of a merry fretful pantaloon, and I like the pantomime better as it is now cast. More in my next —

Your's truly,

F. DARRELL.

LETTER II.

Mr. Vernon to Sir Francis Darrell.

DEAR DARRELL,

I MUST still think you blind to the real character of the sex, and to the purposes — if not of their creation at least — of their education. Their inferiority is not so obvious as you take upon you to decide. I do not say that they should be in our senates, but I say woe to that country where they do not grace the tables of its senators! What you deem them has been said of their lords by a great poet:

“Men are but children of a larger growth,” &c.

and indeed I think upon as good grounds — I could give you examples enough both from books and from life to support my opinion, but you have only to cast your eye round you in the very mansion where you now are to acknowledge the justice of it.

You despise the *race* but are captivated by the *individual* — I am something of a *realist* here and am disposed to think that we do not contemplate the former without carrying along with us our experience of the latter ; what we find in the individuals of our knowledge we attribute to the race, and judge accordingly.

I apprehend, Darrell, you have some reason for your mode of thinking — say, however, what you will, the sex generally possesses all the qualities that enoble the mind, differing in a few with which Nature has peculiarly marked the masculine character, and which would not be consistent with that delicacy and softness that so amply compensate the boldness and intrepidity, both in action and in council, necessary to men. Benevolence, fortitude, magnanimity, they have in an equal degree, to say nothing of piety and *t' other thing*, which *entre nous* is their grand charm. Yes, I have said it, and will explain ; but first let me say, add to those qualities personal grace and the radiance of female beauty, and tell me if the faint remnant of chivalry ought to be withdrawn ?

If chivalry sprang from barbarism, it was the electric spark struck from flint, it kindled a flame which re-animated expiring nobility; and, lowered as it has been, still keeps it alive. See what a knight I prove! I think I hear you first laugh, and then looking for my name at the end of this letter, exclaim, "Is this Vernon?" Now then for my explanation to convince you that it is he — he himself.

Though I think all this due to the character of the *race*, and do verily believe that, compared with our sex, the balance of all that is good and amiable is greatly in their favour, I find myself thrown by chance, fate, fortune, call it what you will, into a kind of vortex, among a considerable number of the individuals, hardly numerous enough to be ranged under the head of a distinct species, and particularly as they are frequently distinguishable from the *race*, only by accidents and consequences. All that belongs to the race these individuals loudly claim, but they

tacitly pursue dissimilar objects, and in those pursuits are perpetually endangering, not their rights, but their places, which they continue to fill, right or not, while they are considered by the majority of the vortex as preserving a justifiable appearance. To be completed to the taste of appetite, to sing with the pathos of a Sappho, to dance with the twirls of a Presle, to dress with alluring art, to speak in riddles and to look their solution, is the glory of these gay and lovely creatures, and all that they require of one another is the *Spartan virtue*. In such a vortex there is no living without gallantry, and he that has no reputation for it, must play the part of a noddy.

I think my mystery is sufficiently elucidated, and that you have no more difficulty in recognizing the features of your noble fellow-labourer (for I will not let you off with your sly pretence of indifference) in the acquisition of a character, which I shall frankly allow you to have obtained more rapidly, and — you may add if you like — more deservedly than your humble servant.

You write with the security of success, and I suspect that it renders your nonchalance somewhat necessary — you are at Bramblebear Hall, and the jealous-pated master of it knew you before he committed matrimony with the beautiful Lady Betty, or, if you will, Penelope, who, you know, “is beautiful, but not one of *your* beauties,” whose “figure is perfect,” whose “voice is soft,” whose “smile is sweet,” who, “according to your observation, detests her husband, despises her wooer, loves — herself,” and is consequently ready to speak softly, and smile sweetly on the skilful worshipper of her idol. Now, with Bramblebear’s titles and additions, as they are accurately enumerated by your observant quill, indifference is a master-stroke. Enforce it, and I shall not be surprised to hear of his taking pains to lead you himself to the shrine, by way of impeding the avenue to all others. Enforce it, I say, to him, and whomever else you please—but you have no occasion to shut my eyes—and your attempt instead of acting as a blind

possesses the property of a microscope in dilating to the sight points obscurely imagined from previous study.

Frank Darrell confines himself to observation ! By the bye, nothing could be better imagined altogether in reply to my hints respecting *your character*, than the adopting of this new ingredient ; for, as I observed to you, the character of a man of gallantry should not arise from grounds too defined and glaring, but should rest on an airy something, overshadowed with the rainbow mist of honour, conscience, self-respect, delicacy, esteem, hospitality and friendship. No man can discriminate and mingle these colours better than you. I am something jealous of your skill, having, as you truly say, for some years emulated your character, from a conviction that a man of the world, that is, of my vortex, must be a man of gallantry, to avoid the damning reputation of a noddy, merely considered as holding out to unmarried damsels that mortifying charm, a convenient match. — *exempli gratia*, the host of Bramblebear Hall.

Accomplished as I think you, the character you give of Lady Betty as to religion, persuades me that the openly abjuring of it is an error in you — Can't you manage to make it an eighth colour in the rainbow? My most formidable rival for the smiles of the lovely creature whom I mentioned to you in my last is no other than young Rufus Palmer who has a good deal of evangelical talk, and, what is still more alarming, of evangelical ogling. Unfortunately his family are neighbours of the Godfreys, in Hampshire, where they have a beautiful retreat on a small scale, which Godfrey's father purchased for the convenience of being near the metropolis, having for the greater part of his life served in Parliament for the County in which his principal estates lie. They generally, however, spend the Autumn and Christmas at Manor House, their seat in Herefordshire. I was in hopes they would have gone down there on the prorogation of Parliament, for besides the riddance of Evangelical Palmer, Godfrey has infinitely more to engage his attention,

consequently he has less leisure to think of me, or of *his* Penelope, and she has more leisure to weave *her* web; but the expectation of the return of some relatives of his, from God knows where, has decided their stay at Woodlee for the present, though he talks of a probable short excursion either *solus*, or tête-a-tête with *La Belle*.

Godfrey upon the whole is a good fellow, is sensible, and had a regular education, of which he has undoubtedly made great advantage — he does not take the least pains to show that he is a scholar, but every scholar sees it; in his manners he is at ease himself and sets everybody about him at ease. Though not prominent as a speaker, his opinion is courted by the most distinguished orators of both Houses, and, being from principle independent of party, he is consulted by those of both sides. But in spite of this, his father having lived till his *a b c* habits were irretrievably confirmed, he entered the vortex of life a perfect animal-machine, and like a dragoon's charger which, backed by his

rider or left to himself, instinctively gallops to his allotted spot, he obeys the word of command given by a certain imaginary officer whom old Godfrey had taught him the magic of summoning up to himself from himself. Consequently he was put down among the noddies, and certain young damsels were directed by their mammas to set their caps at him, as he was an excellent match. But he is a very different kind of noddy from yours—he is not like Bramblebear, dull, ridiculous, jealous, or prying—yet he leaves few opportunities for the exertions of gallantry. His attentions to his wife are neither nauseous on the one hand, nor constrained on the other—his affection, as I said of his learning, is rather seen than shown; he avoids a display of it, but it is detected in a thousand ways.

Your science *dans l'art militaire* will immediately make you perceive the difference between the fortifications that defend the heart of my enchantress, and those that oppose the progress of Veramore, Rivers, and a certain baronet

who shall be nameless, notwithstanding the hornwork advanced by engineer Bramblebear to protect the weaker parts. After this, a noddy would think it time wasted to prolong the siege, if he could think at all upon such a subject — but you know better and that with means and time the reduction of every citadel may be calculated, and unless *la Belle's* heart be a rock, like Gibraltar, go it must at last. And that it is not made of impenetrable stuff certain diagnostics about her eyes and her lips are calculated to remove despair from the mind of a much less determined warrior than Lewy Vernon. Then, I know it was not a love-match : her actions of course are the results of duty, and duty we know is a child of reason, of the head, a rough kind of urchin that has little to do with the heart — It has an arch half-brother, ycleped Imagination, which like an airy sylph is perpetually leaping or flying from one to the other, and will not leave the heart unoccupied. With all her propriety of behaviour, I think her's is still her own — She esteems her husband —

that perhaps she cannot help doing — but she does no more. — My uncle brought about the marriage — he has long known the families on both sides, and indeed we are all Godfrey's voters; now marriages that are brought about are precisely the things for our vortex. Though I say her heart is her own, I do not mean to liken it to Lady Betty's, who is in love with herself. I wish she was — no, I rather suspect that she is not upon good terms with herself, and there I see the greatest difficulty I have to encounter. If self-respect be necessary to her, she is labouring to establish it in her heart. Many little incidents induce me to believe this, and if she succeeds at the expence of that vain opinion which leads women to estimate themselves by their powers of captivating, I shall then begin to suspect that she is the impregnable rock.

I shall now bring my letter to a conclusion. I meant to say something more as to *race* and *individual*, *realists*, and *nominalists*. This however will keep, but I cannot keep back my indignation

at your degradation of my powers for aquatic gallantry. Where did you learn that I could not swim? The WYE, to be sure, is not quite so wide as the Hellespont, but were the reward of my crossing the deepest and broadest part of it to be my *Hero* I would contend with you, and even with the modern Leander for the prize, the foremost on the bank—nay were it to be from Sestos to Abydos.

Good night!

Your's truly,

L. VERNON.

LETTER III.

Sir Francis Darrell to Mr. Vernon.

YES, if I cast my eye round me here, and here only, I should not wait the twinkling of it to acknowledge the justice of your opinion. Of the men and women assembled at this time under the roof of Bramblebear Hall, the latter far outstrip the former in manhood ; most of them have understandings more masculine ; some, pursuits more manly ; others, hearts more undismayable ; and one, muscles more pugilistic—*Quæ maribus tribuuntur, mascula dicas, ut ANNA, PHILOTIS*, that is, the learned Lady Standish, the huntress your Cousin Lady Barbara Lewis, the widow Sabretash who is known to have followed her husband, a Captain of Hussars, into an action in which he died on the field, whence she brought his body, and has never since been afraid of any man ; and Miss Belcher who with a

softness of face that might be painted for a Hebe possesses dimensions of limb, solidity of bone, muscular energy, and pre-eminence of stature that more be-token a Thalestris.

When I compare these masculines with Veramore, Lord Standish, Rivers, and my host himself, to be sure there is no doubting where childishness is the more applicable. But this gives your logic no triumph, for if I were to grant, which I readily do, that all the men of your vortex (I thank you for the idea) were mere babes, that would never prove that all the ladies of the said vortex were not so too. However, I have not time to discuss the point — if ever I see cause to think differently, you shall hear of my conversion, meanwhile I beg leave to retain some Mussulman notions, which I have respecting this

“ Fairest of creation ! last and best
Of all God’s works ! Creature in whom excell’d
Whatever can to sight or thought be form’d
Holy, divine, good, amiable or sweet ! ”

In which apposite quotation you have the authority of a great poet — but remember that poets love to deal in that

fine figure, hyperbole, and that this very poet tacks four monosyllables to the above lines that pretty well deface his own painting.

It is but fair to tell you that our circle is not entirely made up of masculine ladies and feminine gentlemen. There are a couple of fine girls here feminine enough both in person and mind, to remind me that the world is not changed — their name is Craven, they are sisters and at the head of the fashionable belles of Peterborough, having learned of Krutzer to play on the piano, to sing of Naldi, and to dance of Duport. Nor is Lady Standish of Amazon structure or habits, it was to her learning I alluded, for as to her person she is sufficiently delicate, and “many a luring glance her large dark eye sends on its idle search for sympathy” — idle, at least, to a bosom now the abode of apathy, like mine: nor, were it otherwise, am I apt to be taken at first sight; we have not met before, and she and her Lord are only visitors for a day or two *en passant*. Besides, if, as you persist in thinking, I could

not restrain myself to observation, she would certainly make no impression in the same atmosphere with those "loving eyes of tender blue" which have been so shockingly mismatched with those round unmeaning orbs that have been fixed for the sole purpose of vision in the head of Bramblebear.

Lady Betty stands unrivalled by any of her guests. — Her countenance is full of expression, but of guarded expression, and what beams through the long lashes of her eye in spite of herself is corrected and set to rights by the demure yet graceful smile of her lip which, with the aid of a frigid sentiment and occasional glances at the nearest mirror, betrays the real object of her tenderness. Notwithstanding all this, she is *not my beauty*, for in spite of your compliment to the *race*, what you venture to call *entre nous* THEIR GRAND CHARM appears to me, at least in married dames, unfriendly to love, which is the zest of beauty. Beauty, abstractedly, possesses that universal charm which addresses itself to taste, and I can admire it in women as in other things,

as in the symmetry of a colonnade, in the grace of a *Pas de Ballet*, in the colours of the rainbow : but woman's beauty has more to do with the heart, and much less than is usually supposed with taste ; so comes it that, while we generally agree in opinion as to other beautiful objects, we differ widely respecting particular women ; and every favoured lover thinks his own mistress a Helen. This is certainly a principle in nature, and a happy one. Absolute ugliness out of the question, and even scarcely that, this principle is the sovereign agent of female beauty, the magic that radiates a homely countenance and moulds a common form to accurate proportions. This countenance and this form constitute the lover's beauty. — If he obtains the possession of them he is blessed, if insurmountable difficulties intervene he is wretched — I can conceive madness to result from his state. I could never conceive a man to go mad for any woman who was regardless of him, at least I am sure I could not.

It is upon this principle that Lady

Betty is not *my* beauty. She is gracious and agreeable, but I perceive no preference of me. She coquettes a little with Veramore when Bramblebear is out of the room, evidently to amuse herself at his expense, and as she takes much care to hide her dislike of her husband, each of them conceives himself the object of her affection, the one with the ridiculous impatience of a coxcomb, the other with the innate jealousy of conscious demerit, the most degrading, if not the most tormenting, cause of that absurd, preposterous passion.

Your hint as to a skilful adoration of Lady Betty's idol is perhaps not ill-founded, nor am I grown so modest as to decline a competition with any rivals, much less such as Veramore and Rivers, with the *et cætera* who compose her train : but the fact is

I 'gin to be a-weary of the Sun,
And wish the estate of the World were now undone.

I am really what I represent myself to you — “I have supped full with horrors,” and now, “I pull in resolution, and be-

gin to doubt the equivocation of the promise in which I have found remorse linked with pleasure. I hate the world, Vernon — You are almost the only man in it in whom I have continued to confide — men are treacherous, selfish beings, and women are baubles — most of the former shun me and I shun the latter, that is, in society — and even alone I am tired of them.

Whether I am led to it by this apathy, arising from disappointment on the one hand and satiety on the other, or by some latent unperceived and unacknowledged seeds of virtue in my mind, I know not; but I have entered into a resolution neither to dupe nor be duped. As to Lady Betty, if she be indeed innocent in spite of the folly that united her to such a mate, innocent she shall remain for me. There is no judging in a crowd, and I am not likely to have an opportunity, any more than Vera-more, to come to a sure judgment during my present visit, which an unexpected circumstance will oblige me to curtail, and that notwithstanding the accom-

plishment of your vaticination, for behold me, as your sagacity predicted, the chosen guard of Bramblebear's treasure — but the fulfilment of the prophecy and the circumstances leading to it deserve a laugh, and I am not in the mood to raise one. — You shall have it hereafter, if in the meantime my character does not class me with Heraclitus; for, to tell you the truth, I am tired even of laughing at fools, when you are not by to excite me.

I am highly pleased with your account of your *Vortex*, and do adopt both the word and the idea. In such a state gallantry may be a predominant recommendation, and little harm can arise from it during the rapid transit of existence. I believe your Vortex to be of considerable extent, and I see a large and elegant population in your centrifugal circles, as they whirl in spiral systems towards the centre of attraction, (against which the counteracting force is too feeble to maintain them) towards the absorbing gulph of irresistible gyration, — towards a gently-protracted but sure perdition. — It may be pleasant enough when you

first enter it at the broad extremity and till the power of the current begins to be felt, but he must have a bold heart or a brainless head, who after that can pique himself on female folly. You are yet but at the edge of the Vortex, and, like a playful boy in a rapid rivulet which he knows he can stem when he pleases, you delight in being carried along without effort or resistance. — Will you listen to me, if I say, play not too long? or will you turn to the end of *my* letter to see if the name of Darrell be there? Vernon! your Vortex is no imaginary thing; it is the actual state of a certain portion of civilized countries; a false education and habitual prejudices are the origin of it — the characters that form it are prepared for their parts as actors for the personages of a drama. It is a showy exhibition the rest of the world are looking on — it is a play acted in a play, for the world itself is but a larger stage. The glare and the glitter and the *enjournment* of the comedy in your Vortex dazzle the weak (don't take this to yourself) and tempt them to go and mingle

in the scenes, but the wise go away laughing. What will you say when I assure you that my life has hitherto been passed clear of the Vortex! Will you believe, that the character you emulate in me has been acquired without the shadow of right to it in the annals of fashion? I am a novice in gallantry, and, paradoxical as it may seem, my renown has grown out of my ignorance of the science.

If you had known me earlier, I need not have protested much to obtain credit, though I might not have gained by this. You have yet, I see, to learn much of my history. I have indeed played some striking part on the larger stage, where comedies are seldom performed, but where alternate tragedy and farce are acted in rapid succession. My heart never led me to seduction, but it has at times led me to love. I have more than once without premeditation acted a part in a tragedy, and once produced a catastrophe so deep — but I will not blot this letter with it — Turn to my talents in farce.

I was still at Eton, when the antiquated mania possessed you of serving some campaigns, the laurels of which I remember you then thought necessary to complete your character, as you now do the myrtles of a softer warfare. Before I was eighteen, (for I remember not the time when I was not my own master, my schoolmaster excepted,) being allowed by the neglect and indifference of Trustees and *Procheins Amis*, to take possession of Belmont on my mother's death, and about the time I was entered at the university, I stocked the cellars of the Lodge with the best wines of France, Spain, and Portugal, and I opened house to some youths of choice spirit whom I *once* accounted friends. I occasionally tenanted the vacant rooms devoted by my ancestors to their visitors with a set of those light fantastic animals who in outward form and artificial smiles resemble Milton's "last and best of all God's works," but who are distinguishable from them by their utter disdain of all pretension to their *grand charm*.

I had heard of the mockery with which

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some of the wits of the last century amused themselves in personifying the agents of religious ceremonies : though differing little with them on that subject, and equally armed with all their arguments against religion, I saw no amusement in their unmeaning masquerade, and no point in its ridicule ; but in the religion of *Jupiter*, with which my fondness for the classics had made me perfectly acquainted, I found a source of gratification which I unlocked in my Belmont revels, and I established Meonidean and Ovidian masquerades.

In those days I considered the table as affording a repast not only to the palate, but to the taste of our intellectual formation, and I accordingly looked for discussion and wit and humour, and in fact the lads I usually selected did justice to their purveyor — they were young men of the most prominent talents. Had their hearts possessed but a tythe of the soundness and brilliancy of their understandings, I should most likely have retained some respect for my species — but in our intellectual tilts and tourna-

ments the heart had as little to do as in our sensual orgies, and we argued down priestcraft, and bandied about conceits, quirks, and jests, while champagne and burgundy were agreeable; for we none of us ever found pleasure in the complete sacrifice of our senses to the rosy God. But the revelry of Belmont was the wonder of the gay, and the scandal of the serious: Modesty cried, fy upon it, and garrulity made its usual additions, till, delivered over to calumny, my tragedies and farces were worked up into such combustible and inflammatory tales as obtained me the title of Milton's hero in the country, and that of a man of gallantry in town, — or rather in your Vortex.

Yow now see how little I am entitled to the character young men are too apt to think essential to making a figure in life; that I am but swimming at the edge of the current, into which I believe, as I tell you, that I am not likely to plunge. Now, this is no virtue in me, nor any pretension to virtue; it is downright apathy, proceeding partly from

satiety, yet still more from the disgust I feel with the world, both men and women. But there is, I will own, something resembling virtue in an odd kind of a feeling that I have which impels me to advise you, — not to give over amusing yourself at the extremity of your Vortex, though by-the-bye this I do also, but — to take care how you force any one along with you into it. You will find an amazing difference in the results. Take care, Vernon, take care lest while you think yourself engaged in a Comedy you stumble upon a melancholy denouement. You do not seem to me to have been struck with the character you have given of Godfrey. If he deserves it you will deserve hanging if you make him unhappy. A more truly noble member of society, or possessing more distinguishing marks of a gentleman and a scholar cannot be. A few such men would redeem my opinion of our species, and make me curse my stars that I stood not on a better footing with them. You must not attempt to injure him, my dear Vernon; my heart is grown callous at five and

twenty, and hardly knows what affection is except from what is left in it for you, and that makes me anxious to divert you from a precipice. I know you will say, when once your surprise at this language is abated, that

He will not find the kisses on her lips :

He that is robb'd, not wanting what is stolen,

Let him not know it, and he's not robb'd at all. —

that another will if you don't, and that I am striking at the very root of your ambition, — all which I allow to be very proper answers and indubitable maxims, — within your vortex. My advice is not aimed at them at all — my advice is, to ascertain, before you proceed, the real state of Mrs. Godfrey's mind. Is it in the state you assume? It may be for aught I know, and if it is, all I can say is that she is unworthy of such a husband. — 'Faith, it's very likely, for a woman she is, and it is the high idea you have unpremeditatedly given me of Godfrey that has led me into this unusual style, not any imagination that she may be an exception to the general na-

ture of her sex, though that exceptions, a small number, do exist, I believe. For his sake it is then that I say, be certain. The *diagnostics* which you tell me *you perceive about her eyes and lips* are overbalanced by what you say of *her anxiety to ensure her own respect*; as is the weight you give to *brought-about marriages by the esteem she cannot refuse*, accompanied by *an affection* from him, which while good sense and good manners prevent *a display of it, is detected in a thousand ways*. She must be worse than women in general if you judge rightly in thinking her heart unoccupied. If it was indeed *unoccupied* when they married, if at that time it had never been touched by another, she must be a monster if it is not now *his*. I own the interest Godfrey's character inspires me with inclines me to wish his wife may be worthy of him, and to ascribe that propriety of behaviour through which she is seen by you, and perhaps by the world, as acting from a sense of duty, to the same delicacy of manners in a still greater degree than his which casts the

veil of refinement over a passion heard of with pleasure but seldom seen without disgust. We are not admitted to the secrets of the sanctuary: there and there only ought it to be displayed. Real and favoured love, in our days, unlike the Thespian deity, has no "hypæthric faue." It must be seen but by one, it must be taken for granted by all others. So, unless you have unequivocal proof that Mrs. Godfrey's heart is not her husband's, I think you may take it for granted that it is, and be assured, Vernon, that that proof would not be long wanting if it were otherwise. —

Indeed, indeed, my dear Vernon, you are over-shooting the mark. — Your prismatic professions (I like the simile) may serve in certain cases to throw an airy brilliant mist before the eyes of a deluded husband, but they will not blind such a man as Godfrey, in whose case the very mention of them becomes sacrilegious. The ties of honour, conscience, self-respect, delicacy, esteem, hospitality, and friendship are substantial tributes, really due to him; not the *ignes fatui*

in the regions of gallantry raised to mislead the jealousy of fools formed and fated to be laughed at.

A thought occurs to me that may help you in discriminating the character of the lady — get her real opinion of mine. I am no stranger to her beauty though I have never thought of making her acquaintance, for two reasons ; first, because I am too tired with the thing to take the trouble ; and secondly, which you will say is enough of itself without the other, because it is not likely that I should obtain the *entrée* at Godfrey's. Take an opportunity of hinting such a wish to her, and you may set down her answer as a criterion of her propensities. But tell me fairly what it is, that I may also form an opinion, and whatever that opinion be, I will give it you most candidly.

I beg to decline the example of Mr. Rufus Palmer — I hate red-headed preachers — it is a most nauseous incongruity — besides, though I find no soul-saving qualities in the Scriptures, I am sure they have a damning quality when

used as a cloak. Perhaps you will tell me the remark is ill-timed after such a sermon against adultery, but

My hair is black, my eyes are blue,
Fellow sinner, adieu! adieu!

Yours,

F. DARRELL.

P. S. Write *soon*, as I shall not be here *long*. — On the score of *swimming*, I confounded you with your namesake who was drowned in the Severn. Accept my *Palinode* in the words of Naso. —

Es Deus aquæ: nec majus in æquora Proteus
Jus habet, et Triton, Athamaxtiadesque Palæmon.

LETTER IV.

Mr. Vernon to Sir Francis Darrell.

A SERMON with a vengeance! And from you too! How is this? Why, Darrell, I thought I knew you thoroughly — I give you full credit, my friend, for all the essentials of honour and morals, but certes you are the last man in the world whom I should expect to find soberly and pathetically advocating conjugal constancy. I was indeed at first surprised, but I soon saw how it was — there is hypochondriasis in your temperament which occasionally predominates. You were avowedly hipped when you wrote, and not being able to laugh at your guardianship of Lady Betty's *honour*, you naturally slid into a serious essay preservative of La Belle's. She is very much obliged to you, and you are not less obliged to her. What will you say now, if I take

you at your word, and, according to your own proposed criterion, decide that she is a personage of the showy inner drama, one of the Vortex where a man must triumph or be despised? Well then, she has no aversion to you ; on the contrary, she is your habitual advocate. Whenever in her company you are talked of, and talked of no man is more, she has always some observation to check or counteract the readiness with which even they who secretly admire openly attack your character — “one should not believe half one hears” — “tales always gain in repetition” — “left to himself from his childhood it is not to be wondered at if he has erred” — “he is still young” — “I have heard that his purse is always open to distress without ostentation” — “he is allowed to have genius, which is seldom long at odds with goodness” — and so forth. What say you? Is this a true criterion? Shall I put it to account? What I think even more extraordinary is, that whenever she puts in these saving clauses Godfrey always looks pleased, and gives her a smile of appro-

bation ; notwithstanding which I tell you fairly I know his door would not be open to you. I had not waited for your desire to express what I really wished — she only gave the general answer that she could not but be glad to see any friend of mine, adding that I should no doubt previously express the same wish to Godfrey. I have no doubt she would have liked it, but he, in spite of those smiles I have just told you of, put a decided negative at once upon it ; and the man, for whose temples you have been pleading with such interest and pathos, has no gratitude for the good opinion you entertain of him.

I do not mean to retract the character I have given you of Godfrey. I confess I was not so struck with it as you seem to be — I thought it a good every-day character, but I discovered nothing to exempt him from the lot of his fellow-creatures. However, since I received your letter I have been studying both him and her with increased attention. The stress you lay upon her desire of self-respect, and his delicate attentions,

together with your reasoning on the propriety of veiling affections the appearance of which good company and good sense are agreed not to tolerate, stagger me a little, and I have no objection to consider whether *le jeu en vaut la chandelle* ; for I am no expiring swain or German sentimentalist who can look forward five years to the delight of kissing for the first time the little finger of his Charlotta. However I do not at present see any reason to suspect that La Belle is an admirer of your Wielands, and as I think that the little I said about her husband reached you at a moment when your imagination was in a colouring mood, I shall not be in a hurry to raise the siege. Besides I owe Godfrey a grudge on your account, and what would you and all the world think of me if, after a whole winter's pursuit, I should appear to be beat out of the field by a carrotty Nicodemus?

The fellow is perpetually at Woodlee, and there is no deterring him with delicate affronts, and gross ones I must not attempt as he is patronized by Godfrey, though even those I am sure would be

of no avail, for his temperament is **not** the least evangelical part of him, not in the warring of his blood, but in the placidity of his submissions, and heavenly endurance of rebuke. Curse the creature, it is a slim long reed five feet eleven, has light blue eyes with white lashes, a fair freckled skin and a mouth full of even pearly teeth. Then he talks with such delight of Joseph and Nathan, the Mary's and Magdalen's, at the same time squeezing out a sort of fervid smile from every pore of his face, and widening his eyes as if to make more way for this seraphic transfusion of soul. He has more than once attempted with affected simplicity to apply "thou art the man" to me: and I must show him that he is not the man for La Belle. He makes awkward pretensions to taste, and writes insipid verses. Why the Godfreys like him I have no idea — his personal qualities are far below par, and as to family he is a new man.

His father I understand was a prosperous shopman in London, who from his profits and great custom began independence

in purchasing from time to time houses at Alton, where he was only known as a rich citizen of the Metropolis ; then in purchasing estates, which gave him consequence in the county. He continued enriching himself and died a wealthy man, leaving a widow, a son and heir (Squire Rufus) and two daughters to the enjoyment of his accumulated gains. The girls are singing and dancing for husbands, which they are likely to find, their voices and steps being rendered irresistibly sweet and graceful by consols to the amount of " forty thousand pounds of lawful money of Great Britain, to be equally divided between my said daughters" — and the lad, a half-educated gentleman, is thrusting his nose into all the respectable families of the neighbourhood in quest of smiles and praise — he seems to have no personal vanity, but a species of vanity more ludicrous if not so ridiculous, that of being noticed for something, anything, or nothing. You see what a troublesome animal he must be to me. I must find some way of getting rid of him.

A fine picture you have made of your self truly ! — Weary of pleasure, tired of life at five-and-twenty ! I should be seriously alarmed for you if this was the first time I had found you giving way to blue devils. Shake them off, my dear Darrell, and for ever. Life is full of delights, and before no man are they more profusely spread than you, and few are so blessed with the faculties that extract the essence and encrease the number of human pleasures. The classical stores of your memory, the brilliant visions of your imagination, the luxurious extent of your fortune, the command of beauty and of love ! Are these good reasons for being weary of the Sun and wishing the world at an end ? Pray step a little farther into *my* Vortex, not *yours*, and I'll answer for the recovery of your spirits. I say *mine* not *yours*, for not being so strictly adherent to the rules of rhetoric as you are, my Vortex has nothing of your inadequacy of centrifugal force, absorbing gulf, and sure perdition. I will allow you that similes ought to be well adjusted in all their bearings,

but here, whirling, and something of the giddiness that attends it, made up the extent of my similitude, and I had no idea of plunging this pleasant part of European communities into a frightful Charybdis. I thought of heads diverging to eccentric zeniths, and between the revolutions recovering a proper uprightness, like the sloping bodies of spirited waltzers, who at the conclusion of each waltz are as strait as ever; or, to do due honour to an astronomical simile which presents itself, I would have my system likened to that of Ptolemy, who set a brilliant sky of suns and stars to dance in perpetual vortices around this world of ours. You may take either of these similes, or both, by way of illustration, only don't engulf us all I beseech you.

Something of your minor frolics at Belmont I had heard of, but not of the classical turn that you gave to them, which was worthy of the enthusiastic idolatry of the Heathen deities you were so much remarked for at Eton. I think of relating it by way of anecdote to

Rufus Palmer ; he is a copyist, and relying on the proverb, "show me a saint and I'll show you a sinner," I should not be surprised to hear of his peopling his place with Ruths and Esthers, Bathshebas and Lady Potiphars.

I am sorry to hear you talk of tragedies. It is in the larger drama you allude to, or, as I understand it, the serious drama of life, that the character of woman stands high, it is there that it must be held sacred. It is there that I remember to have seen my mother honouring her race, and a sister emulating her mother. In itself its scenes are rather sedate than sombre, but a frolic of my Vortex played there is *michin mallecho* ; it means mischief. One must be serious, and that suits neither you nor me. I am not sorry to contemplate it from our gay little Vaudeville.—Come, step in my friend ; it is useless to think of past horrors, sup of them no more, think of supping with Lady Betty, and take my word for it she will be more eloquent, at least more successful in her eloquence than I, in the invitation.

Where and wherefore are you going, and for how long? The group at Bramblebear Hall seemed to promise some entertainment, and then your new office! Think of that Sir Francis.

Adieu! my dear Darrell — do not keep me in suspense about your movements, and above all things eschew melancholy.

Ever your's,

L. VERNON.

LETTER V.

Gilbert Saville to George Godfrey, Esq.

Milan, Aug. 7th, 1816.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

TIME has begun to shed its balm over wounds which I once thought would have been mortal, and which can never entirely close while my memory remains unimpaired. Notwithstanding the ardour of your invitation to return to England, I own I feel a repugnance, which you will not find it difficult to account for. It is indeed the region of my nativity, but it is also that of scenes from which the most agonizing reflections present themselves to my mind. What have I to do in England, where I am known as a bankrupt in fortune, and considered as the executioner of a lovely innocent woman? And even you, George, how can you continue to esteem or regard,

with the warmth of affection you express, a man who at such an early period of your life robbed you of an aunt you so dearly, so justly loved, and from whose noble and cultivated mind you delighted to imbibe admirable counsels, which you prove to me that you have carried with you into the world? Your dear assurances of unfading remembrance and love, independent of your noble offers, have had their due weight upon my mind. Yes, George, it delights me to believe that you do remember me. You were fifteen when we parted; from a child you had had me in view, and for the last three years of the fifteen your education was carried on under my roof, and under the immediate auspices of the angel for whom you retain so grateful an affection. The manner in which your heart harmonized with ours, the pleasure you took in our social occurrences, the joy you felt in taking your little Augusta into your arms, and the eager look with which you entreated to be her god-father are vivid in my recollection, and leave me no doubt of your remembrance and attachment.

Moderated as my grief has been by the gradual growth of your god-daughter into the perfect model of her mother, and by other soothing circumstances, nothing would give me greater pleasure than to throw myself into your arms, and pass the rest of my life in contemplating your happiness, and watching her's : but candour requires that I should tell you that I think the repugnance I have mentioned, uniting with a local attachment I have formed here, would prevail, had I not two strong additional motives to comply with the wish you have so warmly expressed. I will make you acquainted with these in a few words : Augusta is becoming, nay is already, a Roman Catholic ; and she has an Italian suitor — both strong against my remaining longer abroad, at least in this country, in which religion and love are staple passions, and where it is dangerous to trifle with either.

I am truly pleased to be able to assure you, that I am convinced that no impression of the latter nature has been made upon the heart of my girl.

This circumstance, pleasing as it is to me, rendered my continuance in this country painful, for wooers are not so soon repulsed in Italy as in England, and this young man, the Count d'Olivastro, persisted in a complete persuasion of obtaining her consent, if allowed opportunities to plead his passion. As she was not more inclined than I to give those opportunities, and as I had a delicate part to play with the Count's family, from whom I have received great civilities, I resolved to make my affairs, and the renewal of peace with France, the motives that induced me to return to my own country. I think the family were not altogether displeased at my resolution, for, though much at their ease, they are not among those whom the French revolution has enriched, and they were aware that the connection the Count sought would not improve his fortune.

Young d'Olivastro has some agreeable qualities, but they are dreadfully counterbalanced by a haughty, violent and selfish spirit, and heaven forbid that my Augusta should ever be trusted for life to

any being who knows not how to command his passions. He is very young, being only three-and-twenty now, and like all the young men of the countries where Napoleon ruled, he was obliged to serve early in the army, but partaking his family's prepossessions for legitimate succession to the throne, he served unwillingly, was made prisoner by the Austrians, and was allowed to return home on declaring his real principles.

Since the return of the Emperor of Austria to Vienna he was advised to go thither to pay his court to the Grand Duke now with his brother, to state the pretensions of his family to the favour of the sovereign, and to reap advantages which might be expected for him in consequence of the grand issue of the European struggle. He was not easily prevailed upon to quit Florence — he would take no refusal to his suit, and he agitated his own family and Pisani's in a very painful and alarming way. His mother, the Countess d'Olivastro, was at one time apprehensive that he would put an end to himself. He afterwards became less

turbulent for a while, but his appearance at the Austrian court being considered as absolutely necessary, he broke out again, and insisted on his mother's expostulating with me on the occasion. The poor Countess was very rational, and did every thing in her power to tranquillize him, and to persuade him to go without delay into Germany; both Pisani and I endeavouring at the same time to reason him out of his self-willed passion. We could not make him listen to reason, but convinced at length that his interest and fortune would materially suffer if he did not go, he left Tuscany in the same violent temper of mind, declaring that he would sooner die than relinquish his hope.

His absence affording me a good opportunity, I did every thing I could to cast a veil over the real cause of my departure; I showed no hurry, and strictly observed all the proprieties of a farewell, on leaving a neighbourhood where I had been well received. Having sent a few chests, containing my books and other things which I value, down to Leghorn to be shipped for England, and

adjusted all my affairs at Florence, I took leave of that beautiful spot last Tuesday, and arrived here yesterday so far on my way to Paris.

On the other additional motive which induced me to bend my steps towards England I have not time to enlarge. It will lead me to melancholy retrospection ; but as I now feel courage enough to face images which used to stagger my fortitude, and the indulgence of which threatened despair, I will not turn from the subject — indeed it is your due, and I shall probably find an hour or two at Geneva ; if not, I will make the opportunity when I am at Paris, where I know I shall hear from you as soon as possible after you receive this. Direct for me to the house of Penevaux and Co.

Say every thing affectionate for us to Caroline.

Your truly affectionate

GILBERT SAVILLE.

LETTER VI.

Mr. Saville to Mr. Godfrey.

Geneva, Aug. 14th, 1816.

WE have been here three days, which the inviting serenity of the season has tempted me to devote to viewing some of the celebrated scenes of the picturesque country on the banks of the lake. Subjects that have employed poets, orators, and painters would receive no new charm from my pen, nor could I devote my time to them were I even inclined to indulge the enthusiasm which nature every where excites on these favourite regions. I have promised what I know will be to you a more interesting topic, and I will perform the promise, while Augusta with an agreeable party is on an excursion up the lake.

Young as you were, George, you were but too well acquainted with the events

which first drove me from one corner of England to another, and from that country altogether when the treaty with France at Amiens opened the door between the two countries, and held out a deceitful hope of peace. My misery and your youth, though they could not eradicate our affection, prevented the sustained communication which but a short time before seemed in an established train for life. Your father's attachment to his sister, was one of an indissoluble nature, one which nothing but the death of both could alter — nor that I think — for never were there two beings on earth who more merited the perpetuity of an affection built not more on the ties of nature than on those virtues and qualities which form the foundation of true friendship. He scarcely suffered less than myself from the shocking circumstances which blasted the happiness of the family — I believe he endured the blow with even less fortitude and that it was as fatal to his life as to my Augusta's. When we took our flight, (your little god-daughter was at that time only four

years old,) he accompanied us across the channel, and went with us to Paris, and it was with difficulty we prevailed upon him to leave us and return to England, where not only his public duty, but private business of the most urgent nature, required his presence.

Previous to his departure, which he had but too good ground to believe would be a final separation from his sister, but which I little thought at the time would so soon be followed by their union in a better world, he made an arrangement with Penevaux's house for the regular payment of the interest of his sister's fortune, of which at our marriage I had so fortunately made an entire separate settlement on her and our children; and, knowing how little I had to expect from the representatives of the late Sir Francis Darrell, he would have left me besides a *carte blanche* at the banker's, had I not peremptorily refused it—but though he apparently acquiesced, I afterwards knew that he gave instructions to that effect. Had I wanted it, I would not have scrupled

to make use of the credit — I loved him too well for so weak an estimate of money — but it was never necessary — Five hundred pounds sterling a year has proved more than sufficient means for all that we have wanted or desired.

Had not the mortgage on Grove Park been precipitately foreclosed at the death of your father, I think the debt upon it, would with fair dealing have been reduced to a trifle, if not entirely liquidated : but it is gone and I will not bewail — I want little in this world and your god-daughter has a mind that can find content in a portion much smaller than that which she has in right of her mother. The bonds indeed which I executed to the unfortunate Darrell, and which must now be in possession of the inheritor of his fortune, have lately forced themselves upon my recollection unpleasantly, particularly since my determination to return to England, nor do I repel from my thought your affectionate proposals respecting them. This is not the moment however to dwell upon the

subject — I have more important matter for this letter.

When your father left me I felt as if the only prop of my hope had been taken from me. In his company your aunt was or seemed to be buoyed up with resolution to combat the horrors which inwardly preyed upon her heart — but her efforts at appearance failed when he was gone — she became again assailed in dreams and absorbed in reveries. In the latter she would sit for hours without speaking a word, intent on the gloomy images that took possession of her mind: in the former she spoke sometimes incoherently, at others intelligibly enough to show that she dwelt on the dreadful causes of her melancholy state, especially the duel between your uncle Colonel Godfrey and Sir Francis Darrell — which was so fatal to both ! She frequently cried out, “oh, save him, save him !” and at times seemed to address me as if I wanted proofs of her fidelity — “You know my heart — indeed it never wronged you.” In addition to these violent agitations, her slight frame had

to contend with the consequences of a miscarriage brought on by information of the duel at a time when it was most dangerous.

Much as I suffered, the last words of your father, as he pressed my hand, supported my resolution not only to take advantage of all the means which the most skilful in the knowledge of the human frame could prescribe; but, by cherishing hope in my own breast and proving it by my manner to her, to prevent the total sacrifice of this dear and innocent victim to the false notions and barbarous habits of civilised society. Thin, feeble, pallid, she was the ghost of my Augusta; yet was not the beam of her eye quite quenched, and there were times when it sparkled with its former sweetness; this was when the prattle of her little namesake marked the delightful progress of intellect in infancy. Those encouraging smiles are among the treasures of my memory; I often fancy them, though without the hope they then raised. The cherub that produced them, unconscious of her power, applied the charm from day to day,

and effected so favourable a change, that what I wished, I began to believe, and hope strengthened into expectation.

With a view of removing all the causes of recollection, we had refused the company of a young lady whose attachment would have induced her to follow the fortunes of her friend; and, in order to guard against the communication of our story among servants, we brought none across the channel with us, but provided ourselves with those of the country we were going to inhabit. Paris was out of the question — every reason was against it — the gaiety, splendour, bustle, expence — but above all, the influx of Englishmen: yet it was desirable to be near the capital, for the sake of medical advice.

I took a small furnished house very agreeably situated close to Montmorenci, which is but a few hours ride from Paris. Seeing company, according to the phrase, was completely excluded from my plan; but I thought some pleasing social intercourse would not be the least effective medicine in the malady I was seeking to conquer. This I sought in the family of

my landlord, among whom we found good sense and kindness, which I flattered myself had considerable effect on my invalid. When her little girl began to catch the French, the pleasure her mother testified was great, and it was followed by a wish to attend to her improvement in the language. The forming a wish for any earthly enjoyment was no inconsiderable point gained — it evidently produced a state of passive cheerfulness, if I may so express myself, for active cheerfulness it could not be called; she looked rather than spoke her feelings; it was a tranquil joy too feeble to attain the height of spirits — still it was a flattering change, and I exerted myself to bring her to fix her attention on the education of her daughter. Before the end of the twelve months which we passed in the beautiful valley of Montmorenci I had the happiness to find her thoughts flowing chiefly in that channel, and that the gloom which hung over her countenance was yielding to maternal tenderness and solicitude.

Thus buoyed by increasing hope, I

was thinking of renewing an engagement for our little pavillion when, as I proposed it to her, she shook her head and at the same time said, “do ; but I would not have you flatter yourself that health can be restored to me here — I have been led by the affections which Augusta has raised to take some new interest in life, and I even frankly confess to you that your tender assiduities, the love I have always felt for you, and the gratitude now so much due to you, render me not indifferent to the preservation of it : but —”

How did my heart beat when she uttered, but ! she perceived it ; a tear started to her eye, but it dispersed without falling, and was followed by a smile — she put out her hand, I pressed it to my heart.

“ I will not afflict you,” continued she, “ with an unnecessary prediction — I will even think that I may be mistaken in what I suppose the information of my feelings — try, my dear Saville, all the resources of knowledge and skill — if it be possible to preserve my life my endeavours shall not be wanting ; but before

you again engage this place let us go to Paris and consult our physicians — Though I have lately been more resigned, and even amused, I have unusual symptoms which I cannot account for ; the sinkings at my heart, though less frequent, are more resistless, and I draw my breath with pain ; the air oppresses me.”

It was not my intention, my dear George, to be so circumstantial, but it is not easy for me to recur to that part of my life without falling into detail, and I see I must watch the impulse that dictates to my pen, or I shall have to break off my narrative at the beginning. The faculty advised me to take their patient to a southern climate. To me they candidly pronounced the issue to be uncertain, but also assured me that I had no cause to despair. I immediately determined to proceed to Italy — I informed your father of my determination and the reason for it, and suspecting that his feelings would impel him to come over to us I urged him, if such were his intention, to drop it, as it might prove a very

dangerous trial to his sister, and overturn the remaining hope which had been given me. He concurred in the opinion declaring that he judged of her feelings by his own ; and in a private communication he said he had been ill, and was unable to travel. It was fortunate that we undertook the journey at the time we did, for in a few months after the Peace was dissolved, and the new breach with England was immediately followed by that odious step of the first Consul's — the detention of all the English in France.

Having fixed on Florence for our future residence, I took a letter of credit from our bankers at Paris to their correspondents in that town, and being advised to avoid the mountains, I traversed France by easy journeys to Marseilles where we embarked for Leghorn. The passage was pleasant, and travelling gently through the delightful vale of Arno we reached Florence without any disaster or embarrassment. Throughout our journey I took the greatest care that your aunt should suffer no fatigue, or as little as possible, and I observed a

visible change for the better. She talked more, she noticed the countries we passed through, and she breathed more freely. My hopes were so elevated that I began to feel myself a new man. By the attention of our Italian banker, Signor Cardello, we were soon settled in a *Casino* about two leagues from the town, near Signa, down the river which washed the banks of our garden.

Here, as in France, our object was — not complete solitude but — retirement and tranquillity. Your aunt's personal appearance was little changed; she continued pale and thin, but Augusta, now turned five, so constantly claimed an exertion of spirits, that her cheerfulness began to assume an activity which was highly gratifying to me. We early formed an acquaintance with an admirable family of the name of Pisani, whose *Campagna* was contiguous to ours — they proved at first a source of great comfort, and our acquaintance ripened into real and lasting friendship. The family consisted of the Marchese and Marchesa di Pisani, Signora Bentivoli,

mother of the Marchesa, two sons, big lads at college, and a daughter about a year older than your god-daughter.

In the early part of our acquaintance they kept much company according to the custom of the country, but they afterwards had melancholy causes of seclusion. They were too rational, and possessed too much feeling to attempt to alter our necessary mode of life ; and we just partook of their's enough to make some variety without fatigue. As to themselves, they left nothing undone that tended in the least to restore health to the dear object of my care. She was grateful for their exertions, and strove to give them effect, but that which seemed to produce the greatest was the delight she took in the natural mutual instruction of the two little girls Augusta and Angelica Pisani. They caught each other's language ; their play, their prattle, their improvement was the principal medicine which gave ease to her malady and prolonged her life.

The political events which succeeded

had no unpleasant consequences with respect to us but as they affected our friends the Pisani; indeed, rather the reverse, for it so happened that, among the emigrants who returned to France at the peace of Amiens, there was one whom you must remember well, as he was often in our family circles and considered as a friend — I mean the Count de B. Your father and I saw him at Paris, and he frequently came to us at Montmorenci. He knew my plans and felt greatly interested in the recovery of your aunt.

In compliance with his desire I had written him an account of our arrival and establishment near Florence. We corresponded for some time — he was soon marked out as a man worthy of esteem, and became connected with the government — he was particularly known to the amiable character who afterwards held the reins of government in that part of the immensely-extended dominions under the rule of Napoleon. I tell you this to account for my unmolested residence in Italy during the extraordinary convulsions of the continent for the last fourteen years — my

parole was all that was required of me, and I never met with the slightest public vexation.

Different was the lot of my friend Pisani. Though of a noble family his good sense had enabled him to pass with respect the democratic ordeals of the times ; nor was he a suspected or obnoxious man after the establishment of arbitrary power, but his sons in time attained the age when war claimed their services. To be brief, my dear George—they no sooner quitted their college than they found themselves under the necessity of taking up the sword — they both fell in the same year though in different battles. These blows were severely felt by Pisani, and still more severely by the Marchesa and her mother.

As the mild enjoyments of our intercourse with the family had aided to protract a life which I would have laid down my own to preserve, and which for the last year of it had been visibly wearing away till it hung by a thread — so the gloom with which the house of our friends was doubly and deeply overcast hastened the snapping of that thread which left

me wretched and your god-daughter motherless.

I will not paint to you the scenes which preceded that event. My inclination to cherish those sad recollections has already made me wander more than I ought from the object I had in view when I took up the pen, yet had I been less minute I doubt whether you would have clearly understood how I came to be so indifferent, for I cannot truly say thoughtless, in respect to the religious principles of my child.

All that I had suffered from the malicious talk of an unfeeling world — from the death of your uncle John and the manner of it — from the distress of your father's mind, — from the first dangers of my Augusta, — all seemed light, compared to the dreadful agitation of my soul, when the form of her whom I had so fondly loved, lay lifeless before me, and the expressive farewell of her closing eye was ended, never more to be repeated — or rather ; they all combined their force with this last shock to unman my frame and leave me to a nerveless existence. Yes, George, I was long a non-

entity, and not only my reason, but the better feelings of nature ceased to influence me. I did not for some time even feel the embraces of my child at my heart; it was completely gone with her mother. — But I am wandering again, and you will almost think me expressing myself on an event of yesterday rather than after a lapse of fourteen years. Not so, my dear George, I am recovered, I have been so at least four out of the fourteen. I am nerved again, again have hope in prospect and joy in possession — I have another Augusta. But I find notwithstanding this I cannot recur temperately to those images which were so deeply engraven on my poor brain.

I will now endeavour to proceed more calmly, yet I have another string to touch upon by which my heart is often made to vibrate — not to its recovered tone but — to its former groans. I *must* speak of it — I *must* tell you that as I proceed I feel a chain holding me and drawing me back to Signa.

In a retired spot of Pisani's grounds, forming a small grove, rest the remains of Augusta. They were at his request

deposited there in a vault purposely prepared. A less overwhelming sorrow would probably have led me daily to gaze upon her grave, but mine proved a heedless despondency—heedless of all that could affect the heart of man—She was gone—I was alone on earth—I thought but of the incorruptible part of her nature—it was all of her now, and I wished to follow her—my soul seemed already departed—the earth and all mortal concerns were indifferent to me.

The grief of the Pisani for their sons was great, but in a degree rational; they mourned deeply, but neither forgot nor neglected human affairs. Pisani watched the progress of my disordered mind, and suffered many months to elapse before he attempted to reason with me. One day perceiving an inclination in me to fondle my little Augusta, he ascribed the emotion to a favourable change, and he soon after began to talk of the soothing feelings produced by memorials of friends. He mentioned the desire of erecting tombs as a dictate of nature. Though I was sensible that I was beginning to think more of life and

more like a living creature. I did not agree with him in considering memorials always soothing, and I said that I dreaded to look at a picture, or even at a signature. I added that tombs and their monuments were different—the soothing thought they produced arose from a reflection of honouring the dead, and that they were not calculated to excite that vivid remembrance which rushed upon the mind on the sight of personal relics.

We were alone walking through his shrubbery: as I spoke he turned into an avenue which led to the little grove, and as we advanced said, —“ If the reflection of honouring the dead soothes the heart of the living, as I know it does; why should you and I reject the consolation it affords? Let us partake it together.” We entered the grove—the dead had been honoured indeed! A monument of white marble had been erected over the grave of my Augusta. Imagine my surprise,—I believe I may say, my pleasure.—It was simple, light, almost airy, as it constructed to be easily burst open, and it manifested the taste for which the ar-

tists of that country are so generally distinguished: there was nothing engraved upon it but her name and the day of her death: it stood upon an insulated circular piece of turf. Beyond this, at a little distance, but on opposite sides of the tomb, there were two urns of the same marble on elegant pedestals bearing the names and ages of his sons, and the dates of the battles in which they fell.

It would not be easy for me to define the nature of the emotion produced by this unexpected scene. I think the predominant feeling at the moment was an affectionate gratitude to Pisani, which, as I approached the monument, was succeeded by a more violent one that resulted from strong recollection of the object which lay beneath it. My first impulse expressed itself by the seizure and pressure of my friend's hand: but when I came up to the tomb, I was seized with an universal trembling. Pisani held me up; I leaned upon the marble, burst into tears and wept long and bitterly — I had not wept before.

From that day I date the commence-

ment of my recovery — it was slow at first, and would never have been so far effected as it is, but for the part your god-daughter soon after took in the advancement of it. Her claims on my attention were irresistible as they had before been on her mother's — the charm was repeated on me, and I resolved to devote my time and all my powers to the improvement of her mind. She lived in the house of Pisani with her friend Angelica, — they were reared together, and their attachment gathered strength with their years. Angelica, now a lovely young woman, was then an amiable child — she accompanied us in our frequent visits to the grove, entered into all our conversations, talking Italian and English almost equally well, and became another daughter to me, as she was in every thing a sister to my Augusta, who on her part had gained the affections of her friend's parents.

Now comes the point. — The French Revolution had shaken religion to its foundation. Some clever men having openly professed themselves Atheists

and Infidels, Atheism and Infidelity were assumed as evidences of talent and genius, and it was a much more advantageous thing to be taken for a man of talent than for a Christian. There were however many families whom no advantages could make ashamed of their Saviour, and among those were the Pisani: but in general I saw little regard paid to the Church, and I was sorry to see it; for, though differing in opinion on certain points, I thought it better that men should stand on the basis of Christianity anywhere than be set adrift on ill-constructed rafts of pretended philosophy. What I saw of it therefore in Pisani's family appeared amiable, and I was never struck with a necessity of guarding against its influence — nor, if that had been the case, should I, in the unhappy state of my mind have been able to do it — I will own myself still more to blame: even when I began to think more coherently and suspected that Augusta was imbibing religion and friendship together, I inertly suffered it to proceed, satisfying the indolent portion of reason that re-

mained stagnant in my brain with the principle which I still support—that some hope is better than none — that the Roman faith is preferable to religious indifference.

I shall perhaps do myself an injury in your opinion, my dear George, when I go still farther, and tell you that even now I do not think that this cause would have driven me from Italy — from Signa, — from the grove, had there been no other to impel a removal — had the Conte d'Olivastro's vexatious and violent pretensions not determined me upon it, and had not the receipt of your letters added a new impulse.

I have not been strict in the examination of Augusta's creed; I have been content with seeing her pious and virtuous, and I have trusted to her understanding, which is excellent, to correct the errors of early impression. In this I may have been wrong, but, however her sentiments may ultimately fix as to disputed articles, I shall not be very unhappy while I know her to be good.

And now, my dear George, having

fulfilled the promise in my last, adieu !
I shall leave Geneva at the end of this
week, and probably be in Paris before
the end of the ensuing one.

Your ever affectionate

GILBERT SAVILLE.

LETTER VII.

Augusta Saville to Angelica Pisani.

Geneva, Aug. 1816.

MIA carissima Angelica! Sorella amabile ed amata! — But why should I write in Italian to you, who are as well acquainted with English as myself? — and now that you will want your usual practice I think I shall make a point of writing chiefly in a language which I am anxious that you should not neglect. Then be it so, my dearest Angelica, my amiable and truly beloved sister — let our correspondence be carried on in my native tongue, but without restricting yourself entirely to it, as it will give me great pleasure to read your sentiments, and the expression of your friendship, in the melodious flow of one hardly less natural to me. — And write to me often, Angelica. — You know what I have suffered for some time at the thought of this dreadful separation; nor could I have endured it, but for

our mutual resolution of continuing to open our hearts to each other in letters, and the kind promises and engagements of our dear indulgent fathers to do every thing in their power to shorten the period of absence.

You know what a pang our parting kiss inflicted on my heart by that which was felt at your own — the dear Marchesa saw and felt it, and followed me to my chamber to console and pour the balm of her love into my heart, and her dear affectionate words did console me, and I hope she repeated them to you. “Gusta,” said she, “this yielding to passion, for it is passion, is not surely a proof of the fortitude of the character which you admire, and which you thought you possessed. Be moderate, and I shall approve your tears” — dear Marchesa! her own were running down her cheeks. — “Let not your feelings overcome your reason,” continued she, “and I assure you, that if it appears necessary for you to remain long in England, we will bring or send Angelica for you.”

I pressed her to my heart, and thanked

her from it, assuring her that she had greatly lightened the weight with which it was oppressed — that, depending upon her promise, and reflecting upon the maternal counsels she had so affectionately allowed me to share with you, I should endeavour to regulate my conduct and feelings through life by them, convinced, as I now was at an age capable of judging, that they were indeed the results of wisdom as well as the dictates of a tender mother.

- In spite of her own advice she gave way to a flood of tears, saying at the same time that she would have felt less pain at the separation had it not taken place at a time when she had reason to fear that my father had been attempting to divert my mind from adhering to a faith so important to the eternal welfare my soul. I assured her that her apprehensions were groundless, and that although my father had lately spoken more to me on the subject of religion than he had been accustomed to do, it was with the greatest tenderness, and that he did not even appear to me inclined to lay a

stress on the differences in our sentiments. She was pleased, again embraced me, and gave me her blessing.

No, my dear Angelica, I will be no apostate — we have learned together to appreciate the principles of our belief, and it would be folly as well as wickedness to require that the knowledge of sacred things should be reduced to the level of every capacity — You may again assure our dear mother that this is the invariable sentiment of your sister Augusta, — of her grateful daughter — Repeat it also to our dear Abatte Cevello, with my affectionate remembrance, and tell him that I depend greatly upon his prayers. The longer I live and the more I reflect, the more am I convinced, my dearest Angelica, that however our emotions may depend on external causes, our actions should be, generally speaking, though not always, the result of duty.

My feelings on quitting Florence plunged me into a state of depression which continued long — Signa had been my home almost as long as I could remember; I had no other family than that of

Pisani ; I was brought up with Angelica ; Angelica was my more beloved self. — Yes, these were just causes — I was torn away — I ceased indeed to weep, but I felt my loss the more — those dear objects of my affection remained present to my imagination, and so absorbed my thoughts, that I totally neglected the attentions which I had ever taken delight in bestowing on my father. Having the whole day endeavoured in vain to direct my attention to the scenes that presented themselves on our journey, and being uneasy at my unusual silence, he began to reproach himself as the cause of my unhappiness, and appeared so unhappy himself at my dejection, that I was recalled to a sense of what I owed to him, of that affection and care which his unbounded love and indulgence merited. I became immediately sensible that I was deviating from the principles which our dear mother had so perseveringly instilled into our minds, and I resolved to make my obedience to her precepts the best proof to myself of my love for her, for my dear Marchesa, and for you, my be-

loved Angelica. I know you will be pleased with my resolution, and to show you that I carried it into execution, I will devote the rest of this letter to the observations I made after we left Milan on the country through which we passed, and I hope the change may give you as much pleasure as it did my father.

Let me pre-monish you, Angelica, not to expect that any description of mine can do justice to the stupendous, the sublime scenery of the Alps; but I cannot have crossed them without an irresistible impulse to express to my dearest sister the mixed feelings of delight, wonder, and admiration which the sight of these grand regions of the globe, so different in their nature from that of our own beautifully-soft and smiling vale of Arno, has produced in her Augusta. How often, how constantly did it give words to the predominating wish of my heart, "Oh that Angelica were with me!"

My father, anxious to dispel the gloom which seemed settling on my mind, had resolved to go a little out of the direct road, with the view of presenting objects

to amuse and rouse me; and though he perceived already the change my reflection had wrought, he persisted in his intention. — From Milano we went to Como with the ancient celebrity of which you are well acquainted — there I was delighted with an excursion we made on the lake. In spite of my moral determination, the pleasure I received from the picturesque romantic views of its banks was damped by the absence of her with whom I have from infancy been accustomed to share every enjoyment. I believe in spite of an effort to the contrary that a tear stole to my eye, while I assented to the remarks of my father — he perceived it, and kindly said “ I wish Angelica were with us ! ” I echoed the words, and afterwards made no scruple of expressing the wish before him, as I was sure he approved and participated my feelings.

At the time we were there, the scenery of the lake of Como surpassed in beauty all that I had seen, and I could not sufficiently admire the different prospects created by the eminences rising abruptly

from the water's edge, beautifully softened by a rich and luxuriant foliage, enlivened by innumerable villas in our Italian style of magnificence, and receiving the additional charm of sublimity from the distant snow-capped summits of the Alps in the back ground. My father smiled at my enthusiasm, which he took a pleasure in seeing me indulge, and which his remarks increased. I cannot help telling you, trifling as you will think it, that in the midst of our enjoyment of this grand treat of nature, my ear, so long accustomed to the full and melodious sounds of our "*divina favella*," was sadly annoyed with the intolerable grating of—what shall I call it?—the French *u* of the boatmen, at the piping wire-drawn tone of which I could not however avoid laughing out, when a Milanese who accompanied us, and who acted as our *Cicerone*, said to my father with a truly comic sigh of sentiment; "*Lei vede che la Natura ha fatto tutto per Italia ma l'huomo niente affatto.*"—The speech, to say nothing of the pronunciation, richly deserved the laugh.

From Como we travelled by a cross road to Laveno, a small town prettily situated on the Lago Maggiore, where we arrived the next day and embarked for Baveno near the Isole Borromeo. The passage was delightful and I was not long in confessing that the scenery of Como could be rivalled. On the whole, the Lago Maggiore pleased me more by its noble expanse of waters and the distant views : but in detail, that of Como presented more luxuriant landscapes. We visited the Fairy Islands, as they are called, though I could see nothing fairy-like in the ill-disguised art of man. The palace on Isola Bella is disgraced by a number of miserable hovels close to its walls, which almost seem to be placed there as a comment on the ill-judged magnificence, or rather the ostentation and mis-spent wealth of those who laid out so many millions on this palace and its hanging gardens : but it must never be forgotten that the wealth of the same hand was not always thrown away on such pompous and ridiculous gratifications. — San Carlo Borromeo and

his universal charity will ever be the admiration of all who can feel the influence of that heavenly virtue.

At Baveno we entered on the Simplon road, which led us along the river Toccia to Domo D'Ossola where we were to pass the night. We were now at the foot of the Alps—I cannot describe to you what I felt while gazing on them as we approached them. I reflected that the evening was to be my last in Italy—that those mountains which seem to form an impenetrable barrier between that dear Italy and the rest of the world would by the next night divide me from my beloved Angelica—Again my heart was full, again my kind father sympathised with me and joined in the “I wish Angelica were with us!” Oh! that it had been possible! But I will not dwell on those feelings lest I should again give way to the melancholy that resumed its power over me the whole of that night, unopposed by my father, who indeed rather increased it by his own, and by some mournful reflections on the little grove at Signa: nor was it removed till

Our attention and admiration were roused by the wonders which surrounded us in our journey the next day over the Simplon.

Upon entering the road at Baveno I thought it fine, but what shall I say to express my opinion of part of it passing over the mountains to Breig? It is a most superb and magnificent monument of the wonderful powers with which our Creator has endowed his favourite creature — man. I am vexed that we should owe this road to Napoleon, for I am obliged to allow the designer of it to have possessed great genius — But why should I not? My dear Marchesa must forgive the question — My admiration of this proof of it does not make me forget that all the greatness of this child of Fortune was never in alliance with goodness, or that his ambition was the scourge of virtue.

From Domo the ascent is immediate, the road, hard and broad, winding on the side of a hill through a valley — if such the Val Diviedro can be called, formed, as it is, by lofty mountains standing so

close as scarcely to admit the rays of the sun to the extent of its depth — generally so narrow that the road and the torrent which rushes down it occupy the whole breadth, and too narrow for both in some places, where the road is then pierced through the solid rock. We entered the first of these galleries, which is eighty yards in length, by passing a bridge thrown across a fine cascade which sends a thick spray over it, whilst the body of water falls with a tremendous noise into the torrent below. These Alpine scenes are immensely wild in their sublimity; I shall not attempt to give particular descriptions of them — To do justice to these awful combinations of peaks and precipices, woods and torrents, snows and glaciers, would require the pen of that genius which could make “the live thunder leap from peak to peak among rattling crags,” transform “lakes into phosphoric seas,” and with the sounds of his lyre set “the big rain dancing to the earth.”

Above me are the Alps,
The palaces of Nature, whose vast walls
Have pinnacled in clouds their snowy scalps,
And throned Eternity in icy halls
Of cold sublimity, where forms and falls
The avalanché — the thunderbolt of snow !
All that expands the spirit, yet appals,
Gather around these summits, as to show
How Earth may pierce to Heaven, yet leave vain man below.

I shall only say that in contemplating I was still more sensible of an “expansion of spirit” than of terror: my melancholy wore off, and my soul seemed elevated above itself. I had never before experienced a similar emotion; I appeared to breathe purer air, in an atmosphere of liberty and independence. Liberty and Independence! what could bring such words to my pen but the magic contagion of poetry — I wish not to be freed from the chains of affection — to cease to depend upon those so dear to my heart, the sources of my happiness; and such alone have been *my* chains, such alone the dependence I have ever felt.

We at length arrived at Simplon, a village near the summit of the road.

on the side of Italy — The Swiss side, though possessing kindred grandeur in the character of its scenery, is not so awful in its features as the Italian. The road continues the same admirable one. Just after attaining its highest point it passes under the glacier of Keltwasser — what a name for the lovely Tuscan mouth of Angelica! — whose immense masses of ice seem ready to roll down upon the traveller below, who to his left looks on a precipice of several thousand feet. The acclivity is so gentle that we descended nearly the whole way at a gallop, my father being anxious to reach the plain before night: but we had so often stopped to indulge admiration in our ascent that it was dark when we arrived at Breig.

We were now in the Vallais, a country so disagreeable to me that I will not dwell upon the objects of it as we passed. I felt oppressed and imprisoned by its two ranges of barren hills between which the rapid Rhone flows to the Lake of Geneva. There are, however, some pretty spots on the

way, particularly the situation of Sion, the capital of the Canton: but I saw nothing to compensate for the filthy and deplorable appearance of the inhabitants, their *goitres* and *cretins*. What a relief was it to leave the Canton! and well might it be so, for never was there a greater contrast — between places so near — than that between the Vallais and the Pays de Vaud, which we entered by a bridge over the Rhone — proudly attributed by the people to Julius Cæsar.

We purposed on leaving Breig to pass the night at Bex, and we arrived at that enchanting spot early in the evening. It is situated directly under some fine and abrupt peaks of Alps near the entrance of the Rhone into the lake. The valley is itself extremely rich; its surrounding views most romantic and picturesque, particularly the Alps of Savoy towards the south, where a very high and craggy peak called the *Dent de Midi*, which has its correspondent *tooth* in the Pays de Vaud called the *Dent de Morclès*, is a noble and commanding object.

LETTER VIII.

Sir Francis Darrell to Mr. Vernon.

Dover, Aug. 1816.

MY DEAR VERNON,

I HAVE just received your letter which was sent hither after me — I had appointed the day for my departure from Bramblebear-Hall allowing time for an answer from you to my last, but unfortunately only time, and being prepared at the day, I took my leave. Your letter comes opportunely to give a fillip to my spirits which have been considerably depressed since my arrival here, where my time has been spent in contemplation of events and circumstances long past, but which nevertheless are the motives that have brought me thus far on my way to Paris.

I do not believe that you — though the only man to whom I have accustomed myself to open my thoughts with that freedom

and confidence which are a relief to the mind — for where are men to be found that awaken that interest which unlocks the heart? — I do not believe that you are much acquainted with my family history, or indeed with my own childhood; and separation, after our boyish connection at school till within these three years, diverted our attention from passing incidents, or rather prevented their falling under our notice.

The events and circumstances I allude to relate not to myself, and took place at a time when neither you nor I cared for what was going on in the world; they were, though deeply interesting to the parties, of a nature which only fed temporary curiosity, and supplied a day's talk to beings such as people your Vortex — they involved the loss of life and the destruction of character — they happened and are forgotten, except to cast by reflection hereditary stains, Heaven knows not needed, to blacken one sufficiently dyed with his own. They were detailed to me by my mother when I began to discover a disposition not likely to submit to the

commander under whom you tell me in one of your letters that Mr. Godfrey early enlisted—the demi-god of the breast—she suspected as I grew up that there were neither demi-gods nor gods sufficiently powerful to control the passions rapidly strengthening in the heart of her son, and like a righteous mother she set before me a picture which ought to have had more effect upon me than it had—It had none—that she wished at least; on the contrary, I looked upon the horrid parts of it as the common results of chance, and in other incidents I saw hereditary nature, from which I drew fortifying inferences in behalf of those passions which already terrified her and surprised all good folks who heard of me. But in truth, my dear Vernon, the story is a melancholy one, and as I am meditating, even at this distance of time from the event, some amendment of the catastrophe, which will probably reach your ear from other quarters, I will prepare you for the reports of the Vortex by a short account of the previous history.

My father is gone to the only state of rest that is unmixed with horror — death puts an end to all that disturbs the petty machine called man — nothing survives him but fame, and that is an immortality which does not fall to the lot of one in millions — the man who last possessed the name and title transmitted to me is among the millions — the good that might be said of him is long completely forgotten, as will be the evil, though that remains longest in the mouth of his surviving malignant fellow-creature. I would not draw him from his state of oblivion to descant on his deformities — I believe him to have possessed many excellent qualities such as they are in human creatures ; and that for which he is condemned is no treason against Nature in my eyes, though it is not surprising that it should have been so in my mother's — he was a man of pleasure. Some twenty years ago, there existed as now a Vortex, into which he in his youth had been whirled. I believe he chose his wife at some distance from the limits of it, but, however that may be,

he thought of it as you explain your ideas respecting it in the letter now on my table, and he took a delight in drawing his friends, particularly the female ones, into the influence of it. He meant no more harm than you do at this moment — but so it was.

He had a friend of the name of Saville who had a beautiful wife — my mother said she was equally sensible and virtuous, qualities in women little to be calculated upon — and so Sir Francis thought as to the sense and virtue of Mrs. Saville. Saville himself, whose fortune, though equal to every comfort, was very unequal to the support of habits contracted among men of ten times his property, had some time before his marriage dipped his estate pretty deeply. My father was his chief creditor, and after his marriage became his only one, by taking up all his debts, for which he had a mortgage on Grove Park and bonds. So circumstanced, Mrs. Saville, whose fortune, a small one, had been secured to herself by settlement, could not but feel kindly towards

Sir Francis, who I believe, on my mother's assurance, felt himself in a dilemma between the dishonour of taking advantage of obligation and the passion the lady had inspired. He was so struck with this dilemma that it had an influence upon his opinions — he struggled with his passion, but habits are not subdued all at once. His feelings were clearly seen to be what they were — the lady's were interpreted to be what they were not — whispers and winks and talk settled the matter. Sir Francis half believed it himself, and while he resolved on the side of honour saddled his conscience with this proviso, that if the alternative was the lady's free choice, then the taking advantage of an obligation was out of the question — There was in his mind a doubt, and this doubt he naturally and honourably determined to solve.

Meanwhile Saville who loved his wife to distraction began to understand the looks of his acquaintances and also those of his friend, who was so completely enamoured as not to be able to conceal his

feelings before him. Most unhappily the means which Sir Francis devised to solve his doubt turned Saville's into certainty that all was not right on the part of his friend; for he took the first opportunity of being alone with her to throw himself at her feet and declare his passion with all the vehemence of a lover.

A lover in such a situation, however skilled he may be in the science of optics, is not likely to have his imagination swayed from his direct purpose by thinking of angles of incidence and angles of reflection—but neither will those angles change their properties to be subservient to the purpose of the lover. Sir Francis was indeed alone in the room with the lady whose hand he had seized, while in the posture peculiarly expressive of adoration at all shrines: but it happened that the rays of light from this posture entered a large mirror precisely in an angle to be conveyed by the reflecting angle to a sofa in the next room on which Saville himself was reclining. On hearing the sound of a voice he raised his eyes exactly in that angular direction,

which his wife as well as her lover would have wished changed for any other — not that Mrs. Saville had on that occasion ought to fear for herself, but every thing for her husband and the unfortunate man before her. In her eagerness to prevent mischief, she raised his own hand against his lips, and nodded her head towards the open door. At the same moment she gave him a letter, requesting him to withdraw immediately, and read it. Understanding her nod and misunderstanding every other part of her conduct, he hastened in silence to obey her, and had mounted his horse before the bewildered Saville, who was approaching on tip-toe to listen to confessions he expected to ensue, had reached the apartment where the short scene had taken place.

Surprised at the vanishing of the object, and seeing no confusion in the face of the lady, he almost doubted it to be a vision of his fancy, which had lately dwelt on the suspicions raised by appearances. Without explanation he went forward in haste to overtake the culprit —

he was gone, but there was no doubt he had been there as was proved by the answer of a servant who had just attended to see him mount his horse.

Short as was the time which elapsed between the discovery made in the mirror and the ascertaining of Sir Francis's departure, it had given Saville time to recollect that he had no proof, and that the exertion of a little restraint on his feelings would soon enable him to effect also a complete discovery, to the conviction of Mrs. Saville's brother, Colonel Godfrey, whose affection for his sister was mingled with great esteem; and before whom the talkers and hinters were prudently reserved. Still flying reports had reached his ear, and he had even freely conversed on the subject with Saville, who had not dissembled his uneasiness, *not* at the conduct of his wife, but at the attentions of his friend, which seemed to warrant at least a suspicion of his designs.

Colonel Godfrey happened to come down to Grove Park (then Saville's seat) the day before the mirror scene of this

tragedy was performed. He was spirited and young, and little endowed with the virtue of forbearance. He was riding out when Sir Francis paid that morning visit. On his return Saville in the fullness of heart confided to him all he had seen and all he feared — a passion and clandestine correspondence were evident. It seems that Colonel Godfrey appeared to hear the story with great coolness, and advised the adoption of deliberate measures; but while his countenance was unruffled, a fire was kindled at his heart that he had no disposition to smother; — parting with his brother-in-law he quietly directed his man to take his horses into the road and wait there for him. Determined to force the letter from Sir Francis or act upon his refusal as a certainty of his sister's dishonour he arranged his pistols and carried them with him. It appears that he made the demand in a tone so imperious and fiery as to defeat his purpose of obtaining it, and to rouse a spirit of defiance, which being mutually given with equally unyielding temper, an immediate resort to the *ultima ratio* was

determined. They hurried, attended only by their servants, to the common adjacent to the park wall of Belmont — they fired together at the dropping of a handkerchief by one of the men. Mrs. Saville's brother was shot dead upon the spot, and my father was mortally wounded. He lived through the day and a considerable part of the night — long enough to make his confessions to my mother, and to give her more pain than he had ever done before, by wishing at the moment she was about to lose him, that he had never given her any cause of pain.

The tragedy ended not here — Saville, though not so fiery as the unfortunate soldier, could not in the trials he was now put to keep possession of himself. His wife had retired to her room — he was not sorry for it — he wished for the moment to avoid her. Wishing also to avoid himself he went in quest of the Colonel, whom he expected to find in his chamber : not succeeding there he sought him in other parts of the house and learned that he and his man had been

gone from Grove Park nearly two hours : the motive instantly flashed upon his mind — he hastened again to his friend's chamber to ascertain if he had carried arms with him ; his pistols were not in their place, nor to be found. He could no longer command himself — he rushed into his wife's room, told her what he had seen, what all the world said, and, forgetting himself in his agitation, informed her of his suspicions respecting her brother's absence. In his first transports of agony she made some efforts to appease him, but the information of the Colonel's danger was a flash of forked lightning. She fell deprived of her senses, and was only recalled to them by the appalling sounds echoed from mouth to mouth among the attendants — “the Colonel is killed — the Colonel is dead — the Colonel is shot.” Poor lady ! she never recovered this ; nor her reputation among the revellers of the Vortex. She continued to breathe a few years and died abroad.

Though calumny never gives up the prey upon which it has once inflicted its

fang, Mrs. Saville's innocence on this occasion was completely proved to the wretched husband and all her friends. The letter, which he had seen her put into the hands of Sir Francis, was, after being shown to my mother, given by the latter to his agent to be carried to the former. It was one worthy of the *real Penelope* ; it regretted that she had so ill distinguished between the marks of gratitude and dishonour as to induce the friend of her husband to harbour a thought so unmerited by him and so mortifying and disgraceful to herself as it was but too apparent he entertained. — She acknowledged the obligations they were under, and she conjured him by the honourable tie of those obligations to desist from a conduct which could not but be injurious to her reputation, and to the peace of his friend. This was a style, and done in a manner to convince any man that the lady had not been long enough married to be tired of her husband — my father *was* convinced and, but for a hasty temper on the one side and pride on the other, no blood need have been

shed — but the decrees of the Fates are absolute even against Jupiter himself; so came it that the inheritance of considerable estates fell to my lot while I was yet a child, and that poor Saville was completely ousted from a comfortable one in the prime of his life — so comes it that life itself is the hodge-podge that it is, so highly seasoned with those pungent spices called the Passions.

My mother, one of the best of women, had in her composition a vindictive spice — I learned from herself that she was passionately attached to my father, that she suffered extremely from his gallantries, but that the loss of him had driven her to distraction. — She vowed vengeance on Saville, and she kept her word. — She determined to enforce payment of the heavy bonds against him. It being difficult to discharge them he took the resolution of going abroad, and having an opportunity of passing through France he settled in Italy. Time, that is, the small portion of it she was fated to survive, did not assuage the violence of my mother's distempered passion, —

and previous to her death, which took place about the time I left Eton, she had urged the representatives of Sir Francis to proceed to a foreclosure of the mortgage on Grove Park, which was added, harshly enough, but not unfairly, to the property of a being not half so deserving of it as he from whom it passed: but that is neither here nor there, it is only one of the features of that jumble of existence called society.

I do not exactly know how it happened that Mrs. Saville's relations, who were wealthy did not interpose to keep that estate in their family — they might perhaps have acted from a detestation of the vicinity of Belmont, or, which I think was the fact, the foreclosure might have taken place during your friend Godfrey's minority. Be this as it may, it reduced Saville to a diet of grapes and macaroni, which by the way is after all the wisest mode of feeding, since feed we must, and all that a man, who prefers his mental faculties to the grossness of a voracious maw, a clear head to a stuffed skin, would wish for — I detest your human vultures

— But Saville is a refined man ; and of course wants money for other purposes than eating and drinking. I never now go to Grove Park without having my mind harassed with the thought of his being deprived of it, especially in the hurried and revengeful way in which it was done. I look at his bonds too with renewed disgust at my species, to conceive the malice of this little brute, endowed with a diabolical ingenuity to give to such a flimsy material as paper the power of iron bars ; and, vexed to think that they had kept, and perhaps did still keep, a worthier man than myself out of his country, I had nearly, in a fit of self-execration, thrown them into the fire last spring, upon an application made by an agent of Mr. Godfrey's respecting a liquidation of them.

I know better than you in what light Godfrey holds me. I haughtily refused all communication with his agent. The unexpected stir on the subject naturally led me to imagine that Saville was coming back to England ; I inquired

and found it to be so. It is perfectly clear to me that Mr. Godfrey means to take up these bonds — and now, be it known unto you, I do not mean that he shall. I have ascertained that Saville is on his way to England, and is probably at Paris at this moment. I have a plan, which you will call romantic, but it is no such thing, of re-instating him in Grove Park — You shall hear the particulars by and by — Should he arrive in England in the meantime, it is ten to one but the *ginger* of the manly character would spoil my plan — They would insist and I should scorn — I feel the greatest desire to be beforehand with Godfrey, and I hope to be in Paris sooner than Saville. You have now enough to enlighten your conception of the whole design, and you know me enough to need no request to keep all that I have said upon it to yourself.

Aaron, whom I take over with me in preference to my man Morris, because he talks French and is not in other respects deficient in travelling abilities,

has just informed me that the packet will not sail till to-morrow morning, which gives me time to reply to your's.

In the first place, after what I have written, you will see that if I had an inclination to cloak my own demerits I might impute some of Godfrey's distaste to me to antiquated domestic grievances — but I have no such inclination. Godfrey shuts his door against me for the same reason that most other regular men do ; namely, for my own demerits — yet not exactly that either, but for a character which those have brought upon me, and to which you have much more real pretensions than I. — Mrs. Godfrey's charitable remarks are not decisive of the criterion I proposed, but her reference to her husband is. Vernon ! I seriously think you upon a precipice. I would have you ponder well the tragedy I have been relating to you. I am disposed to believe that Godfrey's wife is as much out of your Vortex now as his aunt was out of that which existed in her day. You know I am not a preacher, but not inheriting the vindictive spirit from my

mother, I excuse you the grudge you owe Godfrey on my account. I am not advocating constapcy — I am anxious that you should continue a votary of Thalia, and have nothing to do with her sister of the bowl, and the *bullet*; and all I say is, keep within your Vortex.

Your character of Rufus made me laugh aloud, though by myself. I think I see him with his white and red, a mould of blanc-mange garnished with orange-peel — with his sanctified leer and seraphic transfusions! He is just the thing to give zest to your humour — keep him up, I beseech you; and let me have him as a provocative, which I feel I stand in need of: but if you turn him into any thing but ridicule, you, more than he, will provoke my laugh.

And why not tired of life at five-and-twenty? What is there in it after that which can make a man desire to go on crawling over the surface of this earth? Where are the delights you talk of fit for any but children? The classical stores of the memory, without which men are clods, afford some transient gleams

of what mankind might have been made, but double the disgust at what they are. Imagination is a horrid gulf that leads to madness — as for love, that is over when one comes of age: beauty consequently soon becomes insipid, and my fortune is so luxuriantly extensive that I don't know what to do with the tenth part of it. Your Vortex might procrastinate the *tædium* a year or two, if imbecility of intellect was not a prominent part of the character of its females. Your waltzing simile is very characteristic of your explained system, for though a very slippery rotatory movement, but few are *seen* to fall, and an erect posture sets all to rights again. As for your Astronomy, I fear you are out — at least you did not mean the simile to be so complete, for you know Ptolemy's proved to be a *false* system.

Talking of your Vortex, I must before I conclude tell you that in the last week of my stay at Bramblebear Hall *I began* (only began, mind) to think Lady Betty one of the system — but it is too late to say more at present — I must go to sleep

' that I may wake again — “ How happy they who wake no more ! ” The only just line, if I recollect, in that most elaborate collection of Poetical Sermons, the Night Thoughts. — You shall hear from Paris — I mean to go to the hotel where we lodged last year — direct there.

Ever your's,

F. DARRELL.

LETTER IX.

George Godfrey to Gilbert Saville, Esq.


MY DEAR UNCLE,

Woodlee, Aug. 1816

YOUR letters from Milan and Geneva have both reached me — that from Geneva affected us extremely — Caroline cried over it with an emotion which made me feel it doubly. In my letter pressing your return to England I expressed feelings of a different kind — gratitude and lively affection accompanied my recollections, which dwelled on those happy days I had spent in the bosom of my more than mother, whose love had never allowed me to know the heavy loss of my own — The nature of that loss I felt only when the dreadful circumstances you allude to separated me from my aunt. The vivid colours in which you paint the consummation of your own loss

created feelings nearly as painful, and neither Caroline nor I were able to recover sufficient ease through the whole of yesterday to enjoy the certainty we now have of embracing you and our dear Augusta in the course of a short time. To-day the thought of this has given us an uncommon degree of spirits, and, being the foreign post-day, I have resolved not to delay replying at least to some parts of your letter, on points which I wish you to be acquainted with as soon as possible.

By your not noticing the information I gave you respecting the bonds in the possession of Sir Francis Darrell it is evident that my letter on that occasion has miscarried; I shall therefore briefly repeat it. — In conjuring you to return to England, I previously determined to remove these — I will not say impediments, but — unpleasant circumstances. This determination indeed was but a renewal of one formed four years ago at the time of the holder of the bonds coming of age, but he left the country suddenly, and I dropped my intention for a time, still



meaning to take the first convenient opportunity of discharging them.

Of young Darrell you probably know little or nothing, and it is not to be wished that you should know any more : but it will be impossible for you not to hear a great deal of him in this country. He is said to possess great natural endowments, yet to be unsocial in his habits, and from all I have heard of him I take him to be an inconsistent character — That is not the worst — he is generally considered as an abandoned and vicious youth, and there are tales told of him too shocking to relate. I have met with him several times : but we are not on terms even of acquaintance — He is courted by the gay whom he treats with indifference if not with contempt — the thinking part of the world keep him off, and these he treats with pride. I do not believe he deserves all that is said against him, but enough to make me decline an intimacy.

Instead of waiting upon him myself on the business of the bonds I sent my agent to him. He asked if I was in town

and being informed that I was, he immediately said: "Sir, you will find my solicitor the proper person to transact this business with" — and telling his name and the situation of his chambers, he directed the application to be made to him. On this being done, my agent was told that Sir Francis had the bonds in his own possession, and had left instructions to say that he was in no haste to have them liquidated. I renewed the application myself and learned that he had left London.

There is something extraordinary in this conduct — I believe it is a part of his character to do things in an extraordinary way — but whatever be his humour it is happily of little importance in the present case. At a former period I might have been obliged to propose a gradual liquidation — I am now prepared for a complete settlement with him, and it is therefore out of his power to molest you; even if he contemplated abiding by the passionate instructions of his mother, who it appears was not satisfied with the wresting of Grove Park out of your

hands, but intended to have put the bonds into suit. But I do not think this temper among the vices of Darrell's heart: he is spoken of for generosity, which he is said to carry so far, that even those who condemn his want of principles are led to feel interested for him, and to wish him altered.

When I think of Grove Park I sometimes wish I had been of age at the time of the foreclosure of the mortgage on it, that the sale might have been prevented, because I know how attached you were to it; indeed how attached I was to it myself: but, on the other hand, the painful events which had occurred in that neighbourhood had made my father indifferent as to its fate; and though I wished otherwise, I heard of the disposal of it with the less regret. Wishing now is in vain, or I would again wish it could be still your's and my Augusta's. As it cannot be, Caroline, I hope that you will find Woodlee comfortable, and not unlike Grove Park.

In the letter that miscarried I told you of the great disappointment it was to Caroline

and me to be obliged to give up the pleasure of going to Paris to meet you. — Some important arrangements which I am engaged in respecting Manor House, and which I have not time to repeat at present are peremptory causes of my stay in England this autumn. I hoped to have managed to remain at Woodlee till your arrival, but as I see by your letters that there must be an interval of some weeks, that is not in my power. I am going almost immediately into Herefordshire and will be back in time to meet you at Southampton; but at all events Caroline will wait here for your movements. Caroline's person you will of course not know; I believe she was not nine years old when you saw her last; but you will know her heart the moment you see her, it is on her countenance; and you will not be the less pleased with it, on finding in her lap a face very like her own on the shoulders of a bouncing girl with the same name.

I have not time to enter upon the general topics of your letters, but we shall

have many opportunities of conversing upon them. Adieu !

Your ever affectionate

GEORGE GODFREY.

P. S. I direct this to Paris, where I fear it will not arrive in time to meet you on your arrival there.

LETTER X.

Mr. Saville to Mr. Godfrey.

Paris

MY DEAR GEORGE,

WE arrived here yesterday. — I believe I was a little unreasonable, as we approached Paris, in fancying that I should find a letter from you, as you can hardly have received mine from Geneva. I have no doubt I shall receive your answer in a few days, if, what would be indeed a delight, we are not surprised by yourself and Caroline, whom you should bring to see this brilliant capital — not that I would consent to think that allurements even thrown into the scale, should it prove possible for you to accelerate our meeting. But I will not let “the fairy promiser of joy” make me so confident as to neglect writing to you on our arrival here, as I shall not

move till I either see or hear from you ; — yet I am so certain of one or the other in a few days, that I will not dispatch this till the beginning of the next week, when I may be able to give you precise information of the day of our departure.

We spent the time very agreeably at Geneva. The mountain scenery and the diversified sublimity of the objects, with the beauties of the shores of the Lake, excited enthusiastic feelings in Augusta, who would not be dissuaded from accompanying me with a party of gentlemen to visit the valley of Chamounix. I more than once repented consenting to take her ; but, as she got at last well over the fatigue and without accident, I was extremely glad I did, as the fatigue was amply repaid by the sight of some of the sublimest scenes in Nature, the admiration of which was increased by adventitious beauties that seemed the effects of fanciful operations in the atmosphere. We were at one time, when ascending the Montarveet to view the *mer de glace*, enveloped in

clouds, which the sun dispersed in so singular a manner, that it appeared the work of some fairy hand employed for our pleasure in rolling back these volumes gradually on each side, to display to our view the richly cultivated plains of the Chamounix below, with the windings of the Arve through them; other glaciers extending themselves into the midst of corn-fields, the surrounding mountains covered with forests of pine, and, as the clouds opened horizontally and melted completely away, the snow-capped summits, with their craggy *Aiguilles* of granite issuing from them, were seen like transparencies on the deep-blue sky.

These stupendous views mock description, and I shall only make one observation, which is, that when we were on the immense glacier of the *mer de glace* it gave me the idea of a tremendous sea suddenly frozen in the height of a storm; an idea which I have since found had before struck one of our most intelligent travellers in this

part of Europe*, with whose writings you are no doubt well acquainted, and to which I refer you for an interesting account of these scenes. I am so strongly impressed with those of Chamonix that I could not resist mentioning them, especially so heightened by accidental circumstances.

At Geneva I fell in with Mr. Falstaff, with whom I had made an acquaintance the year before at Florence. I offered to accommodate him with the vacant seat in our carriage, and he has travelled with us all the way to Paris. Nothing particular occurred on the road, but I feel inclined to give you an account of a short conversation which passed with a French traveller as we were ascending a steep hill on leaving Dijon. It was a delightful morning; the sun had just risen and cast a soft radiance over the beautiful landscapes of Burgundy, the Cote d'Or presenting, as we travelled, on the one hand, hills luxuriously covered with vines teeming with ripe grapes ready for the vintage; on the other hand, a

* Coxe.

large extent of level grounds as luxuriously covered with corn waiting for the sickle.

The rapid ascent of the road to which we had come induced us to ease the horses by walking up it. The same motive had made a French gentleman quit his cabriolet at the same spot. He bowed to us ; on which I accosted him, and expressed my pleasure at the general appearance of the country. I observed that where I had travelled in France no land appeared to be left waste, and that there was a visible improvement throughout the kingdom since the Revolution.

“ Do you ascribe this,” said I, “ to the spirit of Bonaparte’s government ? ”

He replied — “ You are in a highly cultivated part of France : in all the other departments, however, agriculture has made a rapid progress : but I cannot say that it is owing to the spirit of Napoleon’s government, which was principally a military one ; and to make husbandmen soldiers is not the way to improve the earth : fields of corn and fields of glory require very different processes.”

“ Yet,” said I, “ it must be owned, that in the midst of unceasing wars, and in spite of the depopulation of the lands, the country is wonderfully improved.”

“ There appear to me,” he replied, “ two prominent causes for it : first, the increase of knowledge, which, during the last century, had been gradually spreading over every part of Europe, and which was among the things that the Revolution could not destroy : secondly, the Revolution itself, among the evils of which some good has sprung, and the independence of the small farmer is not the least. But this is not owing to Napoleon, whose system was not that of independence of any kind. It originated in the first confusion of the application of the new philosophy, and if any thing could atone for its subsequent horrors, it is this. No, Sir, Bonaparte has no right to the credit of it ; and as little can it be ascribed to the rash leaders and actors in the scenes of the last eight-and-twenty years : their objects were an overthrow and a scramble.”

“It can only be ascribed,” said I, “to Him whose grand and peculiar system is to produce good out of evil, and whose power is adequate to his system.” —

“No, Sir,” — cried the patriot, too deeply absorbed in his own view of the subject to be aware of the extent of my remark and his negative, — “no such thing. We must look for the cause in the national elasticity — the French, if not oppressed as they were in the feudal times, are equal to any thing — they make as good farmers as soldiers — they are the best cultivators in the world, not excepting the English themselves.”

I smiled, but not a smile of derision. Monsieur had already made the merit of his countrymen independent of the Deity, and I could not be surprised at his elevation of them above mankind. Besides his mode of not excepting my countrymen implied that he allowed them the second place in the scale; and what greater compliment could I expect? Nor did I think the worse of him for it. I did not even contend the point of precedence in farming,

contenting myself with saying, that there were some good judges who thought Norfolk farmers unrivalled. He repeated the word, "Norfolk!" and considered a moment. He was one of those reasoners, to be found in all countries as well as France, who scorn to ask for information, and whose geography would lead them from London to Dublin all the way by land. He had never heard of Norfolk, but he had read of China.

"The Chinese," he said, "I know are great cultivators, but they have a soil and a climate that do all the work for them; they have only to scratch the ground and scatter the seed."

"My good Sir," cried I, "the Norfolk farmers have no such aids." —

"*Oh! que si,*" replied he, "the tillage is so very easy that even the emperor amuses himself with it." —

"That may be," said I — I was wicked enough to let him go on in the midst of his demi-recollections — "but you may depend upon it that there is a great deal of poor land in Norfolk, and at times a damp and chilly atmosphere, on account

of which the utmost skill and labour are requisite to fertilize the earth."

"I can take upon me," replied he, "to assure you that you are very much mistaken, that the sky is serene, and that the soil produces almost spontaneously." — I told him I wished he could prove that to my Norfolk friends. — "*Vous avez été la-bas, donc ?* You have been there then ? In that case you must know better than I ; that is, you must know that I am right." —

I should not easily convince you that you are wrong, *thought* I, but I did not say it. He pondered a little on the difference between actual experience and second-hand knowledge, but abated not a jot of the point in question, saying as he put his foot on the step of his cabriolet and wished us a good day — "*Bon jour, bon voyage ;* but be assured that there is more energy in France than in all the other countries of the world put together."

Having given you this little trait of patriotism, I must add Mr. Falstaff's remarks upon it. He had heard our dialogue without taking a share in it, ex-

cept by the partly arch partly contemptuous smile at the making Old England second to any country in any point whatever. I must tell you that Falstaff is a clever man, but he has his prejudices, patriotic and political, as strong as any man on either side the channel. He is greatly addicted to theatricals, and a thorough Shakspearean: violent in the moment of argument; but that over, he is in act the mildest and most yielding creature in the world. The opinion of a single man, accidentally met on the road, drew forth from him a lash upon general character.

“The vivacity of the French intellect,” said he, “frequently gives an impulse to talk, which bowls it considerably beyond the point of fact. With a great deal of real information the French mix a large quantum of imaginary knowledge, acquired by inspiration or some such way, which they will deal out rather than appear ignorant of any thing, and for the reality of which they will warmly argue rather than receive instruction from another.”

I observed that this might be applied to individuals of other countries as well as of France. Without noticing the interruption, he proceeded :

“ And in their arguments their conclusions are not rarely unconnected with their premises. The show of reasoning gratifies as much as the deductions that produce demonstration. The fact is, that debate is become *un premier besoin* since the Revolution : before that, love, sentiment and bagatelle afforded the tongue its principal springs of motion, and fast enough of all conscience did it go : but the Revolution diffused generally the pretensions to logical perspicuity formerly confined to the philosophers ; every *garçon du Café*, every *décroteur* learned to argue from their deputies, and became so many Dracos and Aristotles, legislators and logicians, and every topic became a theme. Even Love, Sentiment, and Bagatelle felt the powerful influence of the expansion of the reasoning faculty. Love argued that marriage was unnatural when passion ceased to be mutual, and logically obtained the law of

divorce : Sentiment was reasoned into the denunciation and sacrifice of all natural ties — into boasting of base birth : and Bagatelle found logical gaiety in singing at murders, and dancing at balls *à la victime*.”

Here I stopped him and said : “ Remember that at that time all the channels of order were turned, and confusion let in as a deluge upon the land. No wonder, as the revolutionary waters assuage, if we see some antic forms resulting from the concussion of the waves : but the deluge is abated, and with the return of amiable manners Reason establishes her just empire. Even my China friend has a great deal of good sense and good humour, and if a patriotic ardour spurs him into a little bouncing, it is not for Englishmen to decry the principle. Pray let the French then be good farmers as well as good soldiers.”

“ But pray,” exclaimed Falstaff, “ let us laugh at the bounce ; and ’tis no mere revolutionary quality, let me tell you. Do you remember the Dauphin’s horse at the battle of Agincourt ?” — Here he

fired off one of his Shakspearean charges.—
— “I will not, cries the Dauphin, change my horse with any that treads on four pasterns : *ça ha !* He bounds from the earth, as if his entrails were hairs : *le cheval volant*, the pegasus *qui a les narines de feu !* When I bestride him, I soar, I am a hawk : he trots the air ; the earth sings when he touches it ; the basest horn of his hoof is more musical than the pipe of Hermes.”

I laughed :— he continued — “ A beast for Perseus : he is pure air and fire ; and the dull elements of earth and water never appear in him, but only in patient stillness, while his rider mounts him : he is indeed a horse, and all other jades you may call beasts. — What think you of the Dauphin’s horse ? ” Taking his cue, I answered, “ as of the prince of pal-freys.” — “ This *cheval volant*,” said he “ has always been, and still is, the hobby of the French.”

I did not check Falstaff’s humour by any serious remarks ; but to you, my dear George, I will observe that national vanity is an excusable, perhaps a lauda-

ble passion, and merits nothing of the contempt due to the overweening estimation of personal qualities. Individuals of every country should judge by their own feelings, and never take offence at it. *John Bull* is not without his share of it ; and I cannot myself help thinking that England is the first country in the world : — I am sure *Falstaff* does ; so we are more than quits with the French traveller on the score of patriotism.

* * * * *

In Continuation.

Thursday —

YESTERDAY, my dear George, was spent by my *Augusta* in rest to recover from her fatigue, and in writing to her friend *Angelica Pisani*. I followed her example, and my letter, you see, is already a volume.

This morning I called on Count de B. but did not find him at home. I am sure he will hasten here as soon as he re-

ceives my card. He is a noble being. During the reign of Napoleon, the candour and temperance with which he always spoke his sentiments, and the disdain and abhorrence which he manifested at every kind of *espionage* and treachery not only removed all suspicion from his character, but gained him the esteem and favour of the government. He was not the less attached to the family of his unfortunate sovereign, because, seeing no term to the usurpation that existed, he had preferred passing his life in his own country to remaining an exile; nor was that attachment lessened by his not entering into secret enterprises against the sovereign *de facto*.

When the series of events dislodged that ruler from the throne, De B. rejoiced in the event, and being known to have shown a sincere affection for the restored monarch, he was received at once into favour. During the *cent jours* he followed the retiring court to the Netherlands. The motive which had actuated him to return to France in 1801 did not now

exist; the Revolution did not appear to be at an end; the usurpation was no longer admitted as permanent. It was necessary to take a side, and Count de B. hesitated not a moment in taking that which had been always his; he remained with his king without relinquishing the hope of returning to his country. He is a man of talents, and is spoken of for the peerage. So I heard from Penevaux this morning at his *comptoir*, where I likewise called. He told me also that he was to be at a ball which the House gives next Sunday evening, to which he invited me to bring Augusta; on whom Madame Penevaux will previously call. He informed me at the same time that it was a very general invitation, as a formal attention to all those with whom their extended correspondence brought them acquainted, and that consequently it would be a very mixed assembly, but that many of his particular friends would be present, in expectation of amusement in an assemblage of persons, from every country, whom connection, curiosity, pleasure or chance

had brought to Paris. — I am interrupted.
— It must be the Count de B. —

* * * * *

In Continuation.

My head is all confusion, George — I know not where I am — I cannot collect my thoughts with sufficient regularity to express them — I have heard of wonders, I have seen extraordinary things; but the most unaccountable that I have ever met with in life has just taken place — I will endeavour to relate it to you circumstantially. — I laid down my pen and went from this closet into the adjoining room, persuaded that I was going to shake hands with the Count de B. — On entering I found myself alone with a perfect stranger, and whom I could not but know to be an Englishman. He slightly bowed. I was much struck with his figure — there was something noble in his look — his eye varied as if from emotion — it seemed to beam from under a dark-bent brow as if it would pierce me

through, and then softening, and accompanied with a mild smile, it looked as if preparing to conciliate me to the granting of some favour. It prepossessed me extremely.

On my asking his business, he betrayed a degree of hesitation, and, before he replied, again assumed his piercing look — then said in a voice soft and pleasing, “ Mr. Saville, I am come to you on business of such delicate nature that I am at a loss how to enter upon it, or even to mention the name of the person whose commission I have to execute.”

I said it must be a mistake, for that I had no extraordinary business to transact with any man, and that there was no name which he might not pronounce without the least hesitation.

He put on his mild look and smile, and replied : “ I wish with all my heart it may be so !” He said this with such warmth, and in so melodious a tone, that I really felt myself affected by his look and manner. “ I detest mystery too much,” continued he, “ to practise it, and for fear of appearing mysterious to you, I will at once tell you

that the business I come upon is one between you and my friend Darrell." He looked steadfastly at me — I betrayed no emotion — indeed I felt none, but that of surprise.

Fifteen years ago the name of Darrell would have affected me. Time and Augusta have dissipated the pangs of sorrow, and reflection has convinced me that if I had had some cause of complaint against the late Sir Francis for not making an exception in his pursuits in my favour, I had no well grounded cause of endless, or of any, animosity. He had not been able to engage the affections of her whom I loved, and in the hour of his death he had hastened to wipe away the stain of calumny : — he had indeed caused the loss of a beloved friend, but it had been provoked and it had cost him his own life. — I might shudder at the recollection of the dreadful events, but the hatred which arose out of them was due to myself, and I have paid it, George. Sir Francis had been materially my friend — he was that mistaken, that obnoxious character, a man of plea-

sure, but he had been stopped short in his career. I have thought the subject over and over again, too often to be affected by the name of Darrell, and not to have thrown the blame on the right person, — myself. Had I spoken to Augusta herself, and not her brother — there indeed I shudder, and I must avoid the thought, or time and my child will have worked for me in vain. — But to return from a digression which but too naturally suggested itself.

“The name of Darrell does not startle me,” said I, “nor am I altogether unprepared for hearing something of the present Sir Francis Darrell, though I own it is a little sudden at a moment when, after an absence of fifteen years, I have scarcely got out of my carriage on my arrival at Paris.”

“I hope, Sir,” said he, “that what I have to communicate will make some atonement for the abruptness of this visit. The present Sir Francis Darrell, with a thousand faults, and a thousand more imputed to him, has a peculiar mode of thinking in respect to matters of business,

which he hopes you will think not among his faults,—or vices, for that I believe is the term used among the virtuous members of society.”

“ I am not at all acquainted with your friend, or his character : — I have lived in exile these sixteen years, and he was a child when I left England ; — but I know that he is in possession of an estate that was once mine, and also of bonds of mine to his father to the amount of fifteen thousand pounds.”

The young stranger's countenance underwent several changes as I spoke. At first his pliant dark eye-brows nearly met in front, but they almost as soon separated, and settled into calm attention.

“ As to acquaintance with him, Sir,” he said, “ you will have no loss on that score if you are never better acquainted with him ; but this I can assure you, that it is his desire to give you an opportunity of repairing all such losses as are not yet beyond the influence of worldly circumstances. He has thought much and with great pain on the manner of his becoming master of Grove Park, and if

some mode could be adopted, not derogatory to your feelings, of effecting its return to its proper master, it would be a matter of real satisfaction to him."

"Sir," said I, "this conversation does greatly surprise me. I know nothing of Sir Francis Darrell; and, whatever remnant of attachment may exist in my bosom for a place which for some generations had belonged to my family, it cannot but be known to Sir Francis, that I have not the means to accept of the opportunity you tell me he would readily afford me of retrieving my affairs. Is he in Paris?"

"He is."

"Then, Sir, do me the favor to tell him with my compliments, that I respect his motives, but that the hope of repossessing Grove Park has not ever moved my heart, nor the thought of it entered my head since the sale of it; — that as to the bonds in his hands I have frequently thought of them, and that he shall hear from me upon that subject."

"Those bonds," he replied, "are no longer — but, Mr. Saville, before I pro-

ceed, I must remind you that I stated the business I came upon as rather delicate, and also that Sir Francis had peculiar modes of thinking on matters of business: — it is not his meaning to confer obligation by what he has done, as you will find, if you will consent to favor him with a discussion on a proposal he wishes to make to you — and I may therefore now say that those bonds are no longer in existence.”

“Not in existence!”

“Here are the skeletons of them which I am to deliver into your hands.”

He took the papers out of his pocket and presented them — I was confounded, and hardly knew how to act.

“Pray take them,” said he, “and commission me to appoint an interview of explanation.” He again advanced them with a peculiar smile. — I told him that I could not possibly take the bonds. — “It is of little importance,” said he, “for the seals are torn off.” I saw that it was so.

“But this is very extraordinary,” cried I, with some degree of agitation — “I don’t understand — I do

not know what to make of Sir Francis Darrell at all."

"Sir," said the young man, half laughing, "few do, and therefore most have agreed to make a devil of him ; but I can assure you that in this instance at least he has nothing of a diabolical nature in view ; — I entreat you to take possession of these papers, and name a day for Sir Francis to wait upon you."

I never in my life was so much taken by surprise — he was so earnest, and his smile so persuasive, that I consented to keep the torn bonds till I saw Sir Francis, and I proposed to call upon him immediately.

"He is not at his hotel just now," said his friend.

"Then to-morrow?" said I.

"To-morrow and Saturday," he replied, "he is engaged to be at St. Germain and Versailles — Will you allow me to name Monday for him at twelve o'clock?"

I assented, and in my agitation omitted to ask a direction, or the name of Sir Francis's friend, who took his leave with a look of satisfaction that added a new

grace to his manner. There is something extremely elegant and engaging in him.

As to his friend, I own my thoughts are quite bewildered : — This unexpected and sudden meeting in Paris, the unaccountable cancelling of my bonds, the manner in which this young man talked of him — It is all confusion in my brain — Then the hint of recovering Grove Park — What can it mean? A trick it cannot be, for the seals are torn from the bonds — But Grove Park? — I wish I had heard something of young Darrell, or that you were with me — Can his friend's remark as to the opinion of many concerning him have any allusion to the state of his brain? Heaven forbid! But whatever it is, or whatever he be, I must have patience for the visit on Monday, which will explain and give me more insight into his character.

No letter from you yet — I will detain this no longer — It will make you certain that I am here.

Ever yours,

GILBERT SAVILLE.

LETTER XI.

Mr. Saville to Mr. Godfrey.

Monday night.

I HAVE received yours of the — : it was delivered about an hour after my interview with young Darrell this morning. I was taking up the pen to write to you, my mind being full of the occurrences which had intervened since I laid it down. My imagination had already coloured the style of my letter, when your's was put into my hand, and which, while it delighted me, gave me a shock that threw all my feelings, and all the ideas that had arranged themselves for my paper, into an unconnected medley which I did not attempt at the moment to reduce into order, and I delayed writing till I retired to my chamber for the night.

I hardly know how to begin now, but, desirous that you should know what I felt as well as what passed, I will endeavour at present to return to the train of thought which I was going to trace when the perusal of your's overturned it — I wish I could forget the contents of it for an hour.

Soon after the conversation which I have detailed to you, the Count de B—— came in, and staid with us the greater part of the morning; in the course of which Augusta received a visit from Madame Penevaux, who renewed the invitation to the ball which the Count de B. backed with his hopes that he should meet us there. Madame Penevaux repeated her husband's observation to me respecting the mixture of the company. — “Many” said she, “will be there whom I hardly know — I hope to see Miss Saville in more select *re-unions* when I may be able to pay her greater attention, but it will amuse her to see the dresses and manners of different nations.” Augusta was delighted at the thought, and we engaged to attend.

A capital like Paris naturally calls forth all our curiosity, and at this time it is peculiarly interesting, but I shall not dwell on these subjects now. In company with De B. we spent Friday and Saturday in devotion to the public attractions; and in the evening appointed we went to Penevaux's. His rooms are spacious and elegant, and in the course of the night became crowded; I shall not undertake, like a delighted boy, to give you a minute description of this magnificent entertainment; you must have seen, though twenty years younger than myself, enough of the superb, the elegant, and the beautiful of such parties, to imagine the different combinations of art and taste in these displays, and in truth I have only brought you into this assembly for particular purposes, to the chief of which I shall now hurry you.

While we were paying our compliments to the Lady of the Feast, I observed Falstaff retiring from the circle conversing with the youth who had been with me on Thursday. He was rather

plainly dressed for such an occasion, but sufficiently distinguished to bespeak him a man of fashion. Falstaff recognised me with a smile and a motion of the head, but he, though he looked at me, showed no sign of knowing me. The prepossession I had felt in his favour was not diminished by his present appearance, and I resolved on making Falstaff introduce me to him as soon as I disengaged myself from the ceremony that occupied me. It was some time before I could do this, as the Count de B. took the same opportunity to introduce us to a party of friends with whom he wished to fix Augusta for the evening. — And here, George, I can hardly refrain from breaking forth into a rapturous description of your god-daughter, whose expressive countenance, whose ease and unaffected grace of person seemed (nay were to my eyes; “they knew not seems,”) to place her in the eyes of all at the very summit of the beauty collected this night. Her dress was of her own arrangement, not new, it was Florentine made, but of no particular costume,

it shared the French and Italian taste, which indeed is formed on the former. Its chief excellence was, that it became the wearer, and produced an admiration which I could not mistake, and at which I could not but be delighted — how dilat-able is the heart of a father! She looked like an angel, and of the qualities we annex to those seraphic existences, the most obvious was that of innocence in union with good sense. — But to return —

Leaving my girl with Count de B.'s friends, I went in quest of Falstaff and found him in the next room. He was standing with his companion observing the dancers. On seeing me he quitted him and came forward to me —

“Pray,” said I, “tell me who that is I saw you with?”

“You know,” replied he, “I live but to obey you — his name is Darrell.”

“Darrell!” exclaimed I — “is he related to Sir Francis?”

“It is Sir Francis himself.”

I started and mechanically cast my eyes towards him — His were upon us, but averting them the moment he caught

mine, he moved from his position as if to avoid me. "This is something extraordinary," cried I.

In spite of my reason, in spite of what I said in a former part of this letter I experienced an undefinable feeling at finding myself in the same room and within a few steps of the son of a man who had borne so prominent a part in the events of my life, of a son so like his father in the act of generosity I had witnessed within a few days, and whom I was engaged to see the very next day to hear something on the subject of Grove Park, and of whose resemblance to his father in another point, I may now add, I was ignorant. Had I previously received your letter my emotion might have had a different tendency — as it was, it ended in admiration, and a sentiment which was little less than affection. I ascribed his visit in disguise to a sentiment of delicacy, and I thought I saw another proof of this in his shunning of me in a ball-room. On recovering myself, I was sensible that I was far from feeling any repugnance to him, and resolving

to show him that I did not, I requested Falstaff to introduce me to him.

“There,” cried he “I fear I am born to disobey you. When you recognised me in the other room, he put some questions to me about you, and I told him something of our *Voyage de Geneve*. Observing you enter this room just now, I asked him if I should make you acquainted, to which he replied, ‘no, not to-night.’”

I felt myself that it was as well, and, without imparting to Falstaff what was passing in my mind, I acquiesced as a matter of course.

You do not expect from me, George, the panorama of a ball, though I must say that this presented eccentricities enough to amuse in the description, but I must hasten to matter more important, and I believe I may add more eccentric also — At the ball I will keep you but one moment longer — Augusta was the admiration and delight of the evening.

As the hour appointed this morning for the interview with Darrell approached, I felt a considerable degree of agita-

tion, but of this there was little owing to painful recollections, which have been yielding for some years to the more pleasing associations of the mind. — Before I left Signa, though I felt a gratification at the tomb of my Augusta, I had ceased to weep there, and in sight of it loved to enjoy conversations with my child on the happy youth and amiable character of her mother. The sad part of her story, though never to be forgotten, gave place to happier thoughts, and I talked of the earlier days of our abode at Grove Park, those days which you remember to have flowed so delightfully. The name and almost the thought of Darrell had long been banished from my mind, nor did I ever in my regrets to Augusta for the loss of Grove Park, accuse him as the cause. His vice was a most pernicious one, and led to crimes at which every man of just feelings must shudder, but never could the want of generosity be imputed to him. Had he lived to see the folly and fruitlessness of his pursuit, which must have been the case, Grove Park would never have changed its master, and by this time even my bonds

might have been discharged by the improvements of that estate.

Such was the train of my reflections this morning as I sat waiting for Darrell : perhaps the turn it had taken was, if not given, at least supported by the impression he had already made both by his manner and his action ; at all events it had prepared me to receive him not only without repugnance, but with pleasure.

He did not make me wait long—He now came in with a countenance completely divested of that cast which implied uncertainty as to the propriety or issue of his visit—he did not alternately contract and dilate his expressive brow—he smiled, and, saying that he was aware that he was known to me, he apologised for the liberty he had taken in conversing with me in the character of a third person, and said he hoped that I had ascribed it to its real cause. I replied that I had, adding that his generous precaution had been unnecessary, and that I should always be happy to see him. As I spoke I put out my hand—I was surprised to see an appearance of the contracted

brow — it was however but slight, and would have passed unnoticed but for the evident backwardness with which he took my hand. He made a kind of angular bow with his head, and allowed me to take hold of his fingers in a right-lined position as if they had no joints.

“I have very unsocial habits,” said he, “but I appreciate your compliment, Sir, which you will not probably be ready to renew when you know more of me. I came to talk with you on business.”

My ardour was a little repressed by this extraordinary exordium, but he soon removed the awkward feeling it occasioned, by resuming his smile, and opening the business.

“Mr. Saville,” said he, “I have already hinted the nature of the proposal I wish to make to you — I do not affect singularity, but I find it sometimes overtakes me without my thinking of it — I have my reasons for acting as I do, and I cannot help it if they are not the reasons of the rest of the world. — What men call society is a sad jumble at best, and one of the most absurd requi-

sites of its pretended constitution is that men must think alike, or rather must all act as if they thought alike : go a little out of the beaten track, and the cry of extraordinary, singular, affectation, like the barking of the shepherd's dog warns you back that you may not get a bite from the teeth of the guardians of propriety and general usage. I know that I am now going out of the beaten track, but I am not to be barked back, and I am grown too tough to be bitten. In requesting you to coincide with my views it is not with an intention to confer an obligation — Obligations in the present state of society are ungracious benefits — If there shall appear any advantage accruing to you, it will be fully balanced by the weight on my side, which indeed will consist in removing a weight that has for some years, as I before hinted to you in our first interview, molested my thoughts. I do not like the manner in which your estate became my property. It is not because we are made to derive existence from certain persons that we are bound to approve of all their actions. It is not my purpose to be irreverent, Sir ; I think

we owe our parents nothing on the score of birth ; it is a forced if not a malicious gift. Who would accept that could refuse it, if aware of what it was to prove ? But we do owe these involuntary agents more or less for their subsequent conduct in attempts to alleviate or enable us to bear the burden."

I was rather astonished at this expression of extraordinary, and certainly not amiable, sentiments, but I did not interrupt him : he continued —

" You are surprised, I see — no wonder, for you are yourself a father, and I have heard a happy one — Far be it from me to cast a reflection on a relation so matured — may it be lasting, but this is not always the case in the world."

I began to be a little hurt, and observed that he could have had no opportunity of judging in his own person, consequently could not speak experimentally.

" I hope I am not rude," said he eagerly, " it is the farthest thing from my intention — I am too apt to be led by circumstances into these out-of-the-way reflections. I did not even mean to reproach the memory of my own

progenitors, but these thoughts are certainly not unassociated with the subject of my present visit. I can reckon among my ancestors some of a very noble nature, and whatever may have been said of my father, I am indebted to him for the honourable transmission of their accumulated fortunes: I have heard too that if all the virtues of the species could be shaken together and impartially divided he would have his full share of them."

I could not help laughing, and he smiled. "Your father, Sir," said I, "was one of the most generous men alive."

"I have heard so," replied he, — "and it gives me sincere pleasure to hear that eulogy from the lips of a man, from whom the utmost I expected was a silent condemnation. Had he lived, Sir, I feel assured that you would never have been out of possession of your estate in Northamptonshire. My mother — but I no more mean to cast a slur upon her memory than upon my father's: we are all puppets in the hands of Fate, and the passions are the strings with which we are made to dance about upon

the stage, to run up a mountain or plunge into a horse-pond, to rise or to fall, to laugh or to cry — we can't help ourselves; yet there is an inconsistent propensity attached to us of approving or condemning certain results which we call the actions of individual puppets.— Now, my dear Sir, my mother was certainly jerked into one of those results when the strings shook her so violently into Grove Park. Undue advantages were taken of unhappy circumstances, and my string leads me to disapprove and to counteract the consequences of that action, and till I do it the string will continue in perpetual violent motion.”

I laughed again — he smiled again.

“It is even so,” he proceeded, “but I beg your pardon, and will resume the language of the world. I am not so disinterested, Mr. Saville, I might have said so selfish, as to wish to fetter you with the chains of a pure obligation. I do not come with the proud intention of insulting you with a gift. I wish you to have your estate again, but I have no romantic scheme of throwing money in-

to the sea like the ancient fool who was overburdened with it — no individual of the tribe of Judah ever pushed a more interested bargain than I purpose — I will have *quid pro quo*, but I will be the gentleman-like and splendidly-disposed Hebrew, and such we have learned by experience there are in our days, who leave your Nazarenes at a distance; — I will be the Shevah of this play, if you will allow me.”

The smile I had worn became serious, and I said here: “Sir Francis, I confess that this language is unexpected — I make no boast of religion, but I have never been ashamed of the character of a Christian — besides, is it not something like mockery to talk of re-instatement in a large property on conditions which there are no means of fulfilling?”

His brows met and parted — “Will you pardon me?” said he, with a very engaging look of contrition — “I have no right to talk thus, I am unfit for the society of men so fortunately tempered — I will endeavour to explain myself without offending. I am perfectly convinced

that Grove Park is more than equal to the discharge of every incumbrance upon it, including the amount of the bonds. An unfavourable sale in the first instance, then the expiration of low leases, and the extraordinary improvements which have been made at little or no expence, have stamped a value on the estate which I am certain my father would have scorned to take advantage of; so do I, and I propose to you to re-enter into the possession of it, giving me a security upon it for the payment of all that was strictly due from you, to be liquidated by annual payments; and I have no doubt if you comply with this proposal on my earnest request, that you will, as you ought to be, be master of your estate free from every incumbrance, in the course of six or seven years."

I was more and more surprised and affected as he proceeded, and when he stopped I was perfectly unprepared with an answer. The humour of one part of his speech, the profaneness of his allusion in another, and the grandeur of sou. evinced in the action he contemplated

had a confused charm upon my mind. The two former I imputed to the too frequent presumption of youth left early to itself; the latter could only spring from that godlike attribute which we sometimes see elevating and ennobling human nature. I paused — his eyes were fixed upon me — he saw the working of my mind, and in the moment of suspense he put out his hand and seizing mine very differently to the manner he had used before, he pressed it, detained it in his, and with a smile which an angel might wear, with a voice of music he said “Do not refuse me, Mr. Saville, I conjure you not to refuse me.”

I really was overcome by his manner — I returned the pressure of his hand, and replied — “What can I say? This is a most unexpected and unheard-of proposal — I should be deficient in common feeling were I insensible of —”

“No praise, I entreat you” — cried he, interrupting me — “I am perhaps the last man in the world you should praise — but do not refuse my request.”

“Refuse your request!” said I, “how is

such a request to be refused, or how granted, without reflection? I do not refuse it," continued I, again pressing his hand, to show I felt what I could not speak, "I do not refuse it, but the arrangements must of course take place in England, where I had very different views, and where my determinations must be greatly guided by the situation in which I shall find myself when I arrive there." I was, however, compelled to say that I would not oppose his intentions, but I observed at the same time that the cancelling of the bonds was premature.

"As for those," said he, "the amount will be added to the sum for which Grove Park will be made liable in the new deeds which must be executed on the occasion."

I was just going to express feelings of gratitude and admiration, though I think they would have annoyed him, when Augusta opened the door of the room. As she advanced, I said — "Sir Francis Darrell" — on which he rose contracting his brows, then looked full at her, making a slight bow and walking away to the

window, where I went to him. He never once afterwards turned his eyes towards Augusta, and staid only a few minutes longer, during which he thanked me for the great pleasure I had given him, said he was going shortly to England, and hoped soon after to settle the business completely. I said that if the arrangement he proposed took place we should be neighbours, and I hoped — He did not let me finish the sentence — the vibrating contraction of his brows took place — “I hate Belmont,” said he, “I think of selling it.” Then with his smile, he added, “Good morrow!” — and left the room without further ceremony.

I know not how to tell you the sensation I felt on his leaving me, nor was Augusta less undetermined what to think when I had told her all that had passed. She had been struck with his appearance at the ball last night, though he had not been introduced to her; and we both concurred in thinking him an unaccountable but noble-minded being. — With these impressions I was about to write to you

when, as I have said, your letter was brought to me. Your account of him has shocked me, and I have dropped the idea of pressing an intimacy which was my first intention, nor will I seek him farther while in Paris than by leaving my card at his hotel.

What I have written will serve as an answer to your's — You find the Bonds are destroyed, and as to the subject of Grove Park, we will converse upon it when we meet — It is late, and I shall conclude, that I may go to bed. In the course of the week I will write to you or to Caroline, and inform you of our day of starting and our route. Adieu!

GILBERT SAVILLE.

LETTER XII.

Sir Francis Darrell to Mr. Vernon.

MY DEAR VERNON,

WHEN we have done all that we have to do, a kind of void follows. This may by some be deemed a tranquil and pleasant intermission of labour: to me it is an intermission of life, and unless my nervous cords are put in motion by something to feed imagination they trouble me with unpleasant catchings. When the beagle, — and I believe also his companion, the huntsman, — has finished his chace, he devours his kit and falls asleep. — Is not this happier than eating half a biscuit, and giving one's self up to the tyranny of a random set of nerves? Any agitation is better than the horror of passive recollections. Having done what I had to do, and avoiding, by choice, the "human face divine" (*read* malign), I

have all day long been subject to my involuntary catchings and starts ; I shall, therefore, get rid of them by employing these vacant hours for your amusement, having by chance fallen in with some precious subjects of your Vortex.

Soon after my arrival here I met with our old acquaintance, Falstaff, who, by-the-bye, travelled from Geneva with Mr. Saville, of whom more anon. We met accidentally at Penevaux's last Thursday, and were invited at the same time to a ball that was to be given on Sunday evening. Falstaff said he should like to spend the intervening days in visiting St. Germain en Laye and Versailles. — He pressed me to accompany him, and we made the excursion together. Both of these places, but particularly the latter, are full of English, and I fear many of them do little credit to their country.

I was making this remark to Falstaff as we were walking up one of the streets of Versailles, when my attention was attracted by a figure in deep mourning, hobbling in cloth shoes a little before us. His person was slender and had an

air of fashion that lost nothing of its quality by the tender stepping on the stones, enforced by the admonitions of the gout. He turned into a shop as I asked who he was.

“Don’t you know him?” said Falstaff—
“that’s Dick Lovelace in handsome sables for a beloved wife who departed this life about a month ago, as I learned at Penevaux’s. He is gone into a mercer’s shop, and it would not at all surprise me if it was to anticipate a wedding-suit.”

When we came up to the door of the shop I went in, and Falstaff passed on. Lovelace, seated with his back to me, and lolling on the counter, was actually examining some blue and other coloured cloths. I did not disturb him—he took no notice of me, and perhaps had not observed my entrance. He felt, and priced, and praised, saying: “Oui, Monsieur—they are good, and fine, and handsome, but ought I to be thinking of them yet, eh?” This was said in good English, for English is spoken at the shops which the English frequent, but the succeeding question was put in such French as Lovelace was

master of: “Combien de tems, Monsieur, est ce que un mari porte deuil en ce pays?”

The man smiled and replied —“Mais, Monsieur, c’est selon. Si on est connu, c’est a dire si on est du pays, on porte le deuil un certain tems; autrement c’est selon.” —

“Oui,” said the widower, “c’est selon,” not troubling himself to think how *selon* might be applied, “et je ne suis pas un habitant de France.” —

“That makes a great difference,” replied the draper, “how many ells shall I have the honour to cut off.”

Lovelace cast his eye round before he answered, and seeing me, said, “Pas encore.” He appeared to doubt whether he knew me or not, which my reserve made him solve in the negative. He looked at the cloths, then at the man, then at me, as if supposing ideas on the occasion for each of us. A suffusion, which did not amount to a blush, plainly indicated that he valued the opinion of others more than his own; — he said he would call again, and went out.

I was buying a pair of gloves at an opposite counter of a pretty little bourgeoisie, and I said to her that I perceived the gentleman who had just gone away was a countryman of mine, and from his deep mourning, I feared he must be suffering excessive grief.

“Monsieur a perdu son epouse,” said she, with an arch elevation of the upper lip — “mais le tems se coule, et on se console.”

“It is some time then since his wife died?” —

“Mais, oui —”

“Long?” —

“Pas absolument.” —

“Six mois, peut-être?” She perceived I was laughing at her. —

“Perhaps one,” said she laughing, “mais Monsieur Lovelace est un brave homme, et on est libre de tenir aux usages de sa nation.”

To the customs of one's country! Thus it is, Vernon, that countries are painted and nations estimated! A brainless, heartless, or ridiculous animal sits for the picture, and the malicious painter,

overcharging even that, hangs it up in public as the resemblance of an Englishman. Here are your social attributes for you! The savage eats and drinks and raises his brood like other creatures, and if he attacks his fellow man, it is to make him a useful servant; but your civilized gentry, your educated men, invent a system of social order, by which all the horrid and disgraceful qualities that lurk in their blood are made to germinate, put forth, and flourish. Not content with the arts of war for the game of rapine and murder, the arts of peace are cultivated to mutilate and to mangle truth, to attack the heart, to give "ample room and verge enough" for the exercise of the malignant passions of which the species is composed. Admirable society! But let that pass, and let us go back to the bourgeoisie.

"And what is the custom in France?" said I.

"On se console aussi," replied she, treating the matter as a jest.

"But a month?" said I.

"Mais, pleurer un mois, c'est beau-

coup partout ; surtout quand on est jeune.”

“Jeune! and where do you limit youth?”

“On me dit,” replied she maliciously, “que le pauvre Monsieur Lovelace n’a que cinquante ans.”

Here was a *ne* and a *que* with a vengeance for a widower who had been pricing gay garments!

At the end of the street I found Lovelace with Falstaff, who, mentioning my name — “I thought,” cried the gouty youth of fifty, “that I had seen you before. Why did’nt you speak? Every body knows Dick Lovelace, eh!” I said it was some time since we met, and his mourning had changed him. “Changed me! Why Falstaff, do I look ill in black? They tell me I look better than I did; yet I hate black, it puts one in mind, eh! But we must all go:

Omnes eodem coguntur; omnium
Versatur urna —

Eh! but Sue was a lovely creature, and

I loved her for herself only, and for no vulgar delights, as I told her mother eh, Falstaff? Not that I was insensible of her personal charms,

Et militavi non sine gloria —

Eh ! no matter for that, Fate has snatched her from me, Fate, against which it is vain to struggle. — Those were pleasant times, but let us now think of to-day. — Gentlemen, will you dine with me? I have some excellent Clos Vougeot, and Chateau Margaux of the first quality.”

As we lamented the impossibility of accepting his invitation, a coach turned into the square and stopped to let out a smart youth, followed by a dame, perhaps not quite old enough to be his mother, but whose dress was sufficiently under-aged to be that of his wife, while the arrangement of it might bespeak her his mistress.

“ *Prô sancte Jupiter !*” cried Lovelace, “ that is Mrs. Crawford — I must speak with her; she is to be at Penevaux’s ball.” —

“ Are you to be there ?” said I, with the most undiscomposed features ima-

ginable. He replied in the negative, not by uttering the monosyllable, No, but casting a significant look, a kind of mulatto glance, bred between a smile and a tear, on his suit of sables, and, kissing his hand, bowed himself away from us.

Behold one of your Vortex, whom the gout and gambling have combined to sink before his time. I knew personally very little of him, but the ruin of his fortune every one has heard of. Gambling is one of the distinguished features of society. Hurra for society! *Hunc alea decoquit*—I never understood the charm of this grand assembler of the high and the low, the rich and the poor, on any other principle than a system under the joint rule of Momus and Medusa, those real rulers of society. I think the fool that is so made bankrupt merits *decoction* in its literal sense. The lady he ran to, that is *as fast as he could*, Mrs. Crawford, and her gallant, the spruce Capt. Rosette, were also of the Vortex, but here they are going fast down, down, down, unworthy of a single dip of ink, except to tell you that the lady would not go to the ball,

and why? Hear. Returning to our hotel we received an *en passant* kiss of the hand from Lovelace who imparted the important intelligence and the reason — “Some English tabby has put her in mind that it was the Sabbath-day — ha! ha! You won’t dine with me then?” To have answered him we must have raised our voices, as he did not stop, and was some way past us. Mrs. Crawford and the Sabbath! At this rate you may look forward, Vernon, to a voluntary termination in some such retreat of conscience as La Trappe.

“We have enough of Dick without his *Clos Vougeot*,” said Falstaff, “but if you fancy him, ‘you shall nose him,’ again to-morrow night at the ball, where in spite of his gesticular negative I have no doubt he will make his second appearance.”

We returned together to the hotel where I lodge in Paris: there we found installed a new personage of the *Vortex*, one with whom I am hardly acquainted, but whom I will give you as I had him from Falstaff. — Jack Bullanger, a gay

little figure, became master of a considerable fortune at an early period of his life, which but encreased the lightness of a heart naturally light, and destroyed all the equipoise that a sound heart often gives to a heavy head. Bullanger conceived that fortune and fashion were inseparable; and in his ideas fashion consisted of a commission in one of the regiments in those days constantly stationed near the court, free admission at the opera-house and theatres, blood horses, and a musical wife; all of which his fortune enabled him to accomplish. The last article was accounted a fine woman, and what was vulgarly called a dasher. She was the daughter of a clergyman ambitious of connection, who, not having fortune to settle her among the great, bethought him of supplying its place by the allurements of the senses; and, oh happy father! succeeded in getting her a husband of four thousand pounds a-year. Nor was the husband less happy in possessing a wife, whose person and superior musical powers were universally admired.

After a little while Bullanger began to perceive that admiration was a kind of coin which his wife changed according to the value that her fancy set upon it; that having for some time given small change among her admirers indiscriminately, she at last gave the whole to a handsome young officer in the same regiment with her husband, who was somewhat uneasy at first; but the fashion of the thing reconciled him to it, and he never was miserable till she eloped. Even in that he found some consolation as he flattered himself it was far from being unfashionable. His habits however were crossed, and he would have given half his fortune to have had her back in defiance of the sneers of foolish people. Her retreat which he had long strove to discover, was at length made known to him in a letter from herself, in which she assured him of her attachment, and requested a supply of money. He did not hesitate; he sent her money, wrote her a love letter conjuring her to return to him, and promised never to reproach her. Void of shame, she would gladly have em-

braced this offer, for her *gallant* had forsaken her; — but there was another barrier, sometimes more difficult to surmount even than shame; — she could not part with her infant, one too clearly not her husband's. In reply to his letter she unblushingly imparted the dilemma, which was no sooner known than removed; he received both the mother and the daughter, and was happy. Don't you think he deserved to be so, Vernon? This was not the case with her father — his ambition had distorted his imagination; but he had understanding enough to see that he had made a strumpet of his daughter, and he died of a broken heart.

After some time Mrs. Bullanger, trusting to the silly good nature of her husband left him his adopted daughter to take care of, and set off for another campaign with Captain O'Toandagen, a young artillery-officer going to the Peninsula. Since the peace she has been travelling it seems, and has again had the modesty to write to her husband from Bourdeaux for more money, which he sent, and was come so far on his way to meet her.

suited to her eye ; it was clear but not fair ; her neck rose from her bust with a distinguishing elegance ; her stature, though above the height of her companions in the dance, appeared hardly above the middle size ; her hands and feet small, and her arms formed to complete the grace which attended every movement of her person. — If there remained any property yet unperceived, to give the stamp of perfection to her beauty, it received it from the unconscious, unaffected manner with which she removed her eyes when she found me gazing at her. —

“ A delightful girl she is,” continued Falstaff, “ and unrivalled in dancing. Her countenance is animated, but it is a countenance of innocence. From her excelling in the art, a common observer might be led to detect in her eyes some slight degree of vanity, but the propriety and modesty of all her steps evince the contrary. Vanity would impel her to overstep the bounds of domestic dancing to show that she could rival the movements of a Goselin on the stage. — We see nothing of this ; she dances with spirit,

because she is fond of dancing, and she dances well, because it is expected of her by her friends. It is evident, however, that she takes more pleasure than pride in it."

I agreed that the love of dancing is, in itself, a passion, especially among the French ; they dance for the sake of dancing ; the choice of partners being quite secondary. It is not an uncommon thing at their rural assemblées, when a want of partners occurs, to see a set made up entirely of men. I remarked too, as a striking proof of this passion, that the man who was dancing with Miss Saville was infinitely more engaged in the management of his own feet, than in admiring hers, or any other beauty she possesses : on which I observed to Falstaff that I already began to think that it must be, not only a very innocent amusement, but a special preservative of virtue, "for how else," cried I, "could a man dance with such a girl and not forget himself completely?"

"Your servant;" said he, "I did not recommend it as a specific, and I see by your remark that you would not be so innocent a dancer as Miss Saville's partner. — I

adhere to my proposition that it is an innocent amusement. — Even that young lady opposite to her, who emulates the steps of Psyché can scarcely be said to compromise her modesty, for it is obvious that the pleasure of the dance wholly engages her : — but let us on and try.”

We passed along from set to set, and noticed a number of fine girls, and good dancers, and I certainly was not successful in looking for the passion of envy, which I had often detected in our English ball-rooms : — but I sometimes pointed out that of vanity, which Falstaff always declared was absorbed by the dancing principle.

At the usual interval of the country dances the by-standers were pressed together into the middle of the room, or kept on their seats near the walls, to form an elliptical alley for the Waltzers. “ Attention,” — cried I to Falstaff. —

The perfection of waltzing, you, Vernon, well know, depends upon the conjunction of two persons so nicely interlaced by the arms as to form a species of planet whirling by means of a

certain step round its own centre, and at the same time gliding about the ball-room elliptically, typifying at once the diurnal and annual motions.

“Hurra for innocence !” cried I, “here are your dancing principles !” —

“Call it any thing but dancing,” said he, “do look at that couple : — the feet never spring from the ground as in a dance, it is nothing but an embrace, and a moving poise. In fact it is the circulation of an indecent posture, in which no woman could consent to stand still for a moment, and the indecency of which cannot be altered by the addition of motion ; yet we see *modest ladies* with uncovered bosoms and bare shoulders, whirling round a room full of company with a man in a mixture of limbs, for which, if surprised alone, they would inevitably lose their reputation: yet are their fathers and husbands looking on while their daughters and wives are publicly incurring the contempt and suspicion of every man of reflection.” —

“Then,” cried I, laughing, “the day is mine.” —

“There may be balls without waltzes,” replied he: — “this is no dancing. — I would venture to bet twenty to one we do not see Augusta Saville among these twining circulators.” He would have won, and I was rather pleased not to see such beauty in so degrading a light.

A promenade followed, during which we strolled into the card-room, where *Ecarté* was the principal attraction, and we were not much surprised to find Lovelace and Bullanger betting on the cards. The two men of fashion had lived on terms of intimacy, and their wives frequented each other’s parties, till one of them no longer retained your *Spartan virtue*. Lovelace was showing him some jewels which had been his wife’s. — “Poor Sue!” said he, “she set a great value upon this ring — look at these seals — here’s a pin worth a hundred guineas — You remember her pearls, Jack, eh? I promised her never to part with them, — no more I will, no, not to any other wife I may marry; — and I may marry again, eh? why not, eh?

I am a young man yet, not much more than forty, Jack — prime of life, eh! — no objection though to the wearing of them in that case, eh! Poor dear Sue is in heaven, and would not be the worse for it, eh!”

Here Bullanger, who had divided his attention between the turn the cards took and Lovelace's dead wife's jewels, exclaimed; “Heaven! How long have you believed there was such a place, Lovelace?”

“Ah! Jack!” replied he with a religious shake of the head, “I never saw any body die before, and I could not help saying my prayers before Sue's aunt, and I repeated aloud, to the surprise of the old lady, the Belief, the Lord's Prayer, Ten Commandments, and the Grace of our Lord.” —

“The deuce!” cried Bullanger, “all by heart? what a memory you must have! But to say the truth, I am myself a good deal reformed lately in those matters, and go to church now and then in consequence of some of Mrs. B.'s admirable letters which she wrote some years ago

(before she left me the second time !)" —
A settlement of the bets was now called for, and Lovelace had about fifty Louis to pay. We escaped as the two Solomons were lightening their pockets.

It was in the second-circulation of rotatory bodies, when we were admiring the improved boldness of posture, that a very striking couple, who had entered the room while we were among the card-players, came swimming along in mystic revolution. The man was a stout German officer, whose bristly whiskers had struck terror in the field of battle, and were now carefully cultivated to charm in a ball-room. The lady was comely, but lost some of the height of her person from her head and shoulders being bent considerably backwards in absolute dependence on the strength of her partner's hands. As they approached that part of the orbit where we stood, Falstaff, in spite of the buz of, "C'est la Baronne Barbonfalbac," recognized Bullanger's campaigner, in quest of whom he was on his way to Bourdeaux. He immediately imparted the recognition. I was

standing by a German, whom I maliciously asked if he knew her name.

"Yes," said he, "C'est Madame la Baronne Barbonfalbac." —

"Apparament," said I, "elle est Angloise." —

"Cela se peut," replied he coolly, "mais elle n'est pas moins Madame Barbonfalbac."

"Vous la connoissez, sans doute?"

"Eardi, cela se peut bien aussi, puisque je suis le Baron Barbonfalbac." I bowed with all due respect asking a thousand pardons. "Pas de quoi," replied he civilly, "'tis very natural question — she waltzes with my dear friend Knocandoff. She is of your country, ish she not very fine woman?" I found myself involved in a very ticklish conversation, but I could not do less than protest he had proved his taste, which he interpreted in favour of Madame la Baronne's beauty, and accordingly acknowledged the compliment with a leering stare and a grin. I saw Falstaff struggling to stifle a laugh, nor was I easily restrained from one myself.

We were relieved by the Baron's dear

friend Knocandoff making his way through the crowd to inform him that the Baronne found herself indisposed, and had taken a seat at the other end of the room, whither the friends hastened.

“She certainly got a glimpse of me,” said Falstaff.

“Her indisposition,” said I, “will probably encrease when she gets a glimpse of Bullanger.”

“I think, replied he, “she would rather see him than me.”

The scene would be curious, and we determined to see it. As the waltzing finished, we observed Bullanger and Lovelace mixing in the general promenade that followed. We kept them in view, and saw them approach the spot where the lady sat. As soon as he saw her he started and seemed to doubt his eyes. — The Baron was sitting at her side, and Knocandoff was standing before her.

“It must be she,” exclaimed he. “I say, Lovelace, is not that Mrs. Bullanger?”

“’Tis a long time since I saw her,” replied Lovelace, “but I should think it very likely, eh? — Hah! Monsieur

Knocandoff!" continued he, recognizing the German officer whom he had made an acquaintance with at Versailles, "Voici mon ami qui prend dans son tête qu'il sait le dame avec qui vous parle; voulez-vous le introducer?"

"Volontiers!" replied the German, "Ce Monsieur, comment s'appelle-t-il?"

"C'est Jack Bullanger: tout le monde sait Jack."

"Monsieur Jack," said Knocandoff, "connoissez vous Madame ——?"

"Ah! Mr. Bullanger," cried the lady, anticipating the introduction, "I am glad to see you — how long since you left England? Give me leave to present you to Baron Barbonfalbac — Baron, a friend of our poor O'Toanagain."

"C'etoit un brave homme, O'Toanagain," said the Baron, "he break de neck in de Pyrennée. — I very sorry, but so much better for me — Oh! you did know O'Toanagain?"

Bullanger confounded, had not a word to say. He turned his eyes piteously on his wife, and uttered, "What am I to think?" — She stopped him short, and, with a look

he well understood, bade him be comforted :— “Grieving,” said she, “will not recall him ; — remember where we are, — a word to the wise : — to-morrow I will tell you all : — we are at the hotel de —, what hotel, Baron ?” — “Dresde, my loaf, where we will be glad to see Toanagain’s friend.”

Awed by the appearance of the German, and unwilling to produce a scene, Bullanger preferred submitting to his own disgrace ; and, still hoping that she would return to him, he wished her and the Baron a good night and left the room. — Lovelace was not so merciful, he showed Madame la Baronne by a smile, that his memory was good, and he took an opportunity, in the course of the night, to tell her history to Knocandoff, in consequence of which, the indignant Barbonfalbac relinquished her the next morning to her happy husband, stipulating only for a discharge of the bill at the hotel de Dresde, and repayment of the expenses of Mrs. Bullanger’s journeys, which the Baron had laid out most disinterestedly, besides allowing her, for

the sake of conveniency in travelling, to take his name, for which he made no demand.

So much for these Puppets: — they are performing in the last acts of your *Vortical Vaudeville*. I was greatly amused with them, and determined to let you have them; — so here I send you a volunteer volume, having answered your last while I was at Dover, and you may either laugh *with* me, or *at* me for wasting my time. But the fact is, that having accomplished the object of my journey I have little else to do: — Paris, like London, — like all other overpeopled places, has few charms for me: — “man delights me not, nor woman either, though by your laughing you seem to think so.” You may spare yourself the discovery of indications in my extolling a soft dark eye, a graceful arm, and the rest of it. Beauty may yet dazzle my eye, but never will it reach my heart; — ’tis over. — I saw her again the other day; — she came into the room at the conclusion of my business with her father. To convince myself that she

had made no impression on me, I did not look at her a second time after my bow; though in that glance I was convinced that her beauty did not depend on candle-light and a showy dress.

I am expecting a letter from you, but after you receive this, direct no more here. — I leave Paris shortly for London, and, if you have given up *La Belle*, which I seriously hope you have, you may go and lose a few weeks with me at Belmont Lodge.

Ever your's,

F. DARRELL.

LETTER XIII.

Mr. Vernon to Sir Francis Darrell.

Mount Vernon, Sept. 3d.

THE place and the month in the date of this letter, my dear Darrell, will immediately fill your imagination with pointers, setters, greyhounds, partridges, hares, and all the train, equipage, and sylvan accoutrements of Dian and her mountain nymphs ; and moreover, powder and shot, of which that lunatic goddess was completely ignorant, and had not *nous* enough to invent.

To this glorious show you may add the goddess herself, if you can figure her in the person of your acquaintance, Lady Barbara Lewis, who came here on the eve of the first, by my brother's invitation, to enjoy the slaughter, and assist in the division of the spoils. She

is a great favorite with the Baron for her bold riding, and I shall not be surprised to see her take a gun and bring down the outermost bird of the covey. I wonder my sister is not jealous of her : — she must rely upon her want of beauty, but I could tell her that there are other charms, and that “ where those are light Eros finds a feere.” However it is no business of mine, and if my Lord will spend all his time with dogs, horses, and a huntress, my lady must look to herself, that’s all I say, and who would blame her ? Not I.

Lady Mount Vernon, young and certainly handsome, being of too delicate a frame to follow my brother over gates and ploughed fields, appears nevertheless to participate his delights, as it were by reverberation. I am extremely astonished at her, and cannot believe it natural. She is fond of reading, and is at present engaged with the Duke of Marlborough’s wars ; and she talks of his tactics and genius, so as to show that she is greatly interested in her book, yet she appears to listen with infinitely more delight to the

manceuvres of General Lord Mount Vernon on this ridge and that lea, the creeping of Chloe, the pointing of Bob, the flushing of the covey, the whur of their wings, the style of aiming the gun, each man dropping his two picked birds, *pop*, *pop*, from her Lord's double barrrel, *pop*, *pop*, from his friend's.—Then to see with what patience, or rather glee, she listens to Barbara's sporting slang, who, in anticipation of the approaching hunting season, goes over the feats of the last with a tenacity of memory that calendars the remarkably fine scenting days, the duration of the runs, the gates she leaped, the size of the hare, and the name of the rider who wore the scut.

“John,” says she to my brother, “do you remember the 11th of December?”

“I shall never forget it, Bab,” says he, “we had capital sport, — nothing like it all the season, — the ground just nicely open, — the scent lying deliciously, — the hounds all in fine spirits, all staunch, not a single false tongue that day.”

“Do you remember,” says she, “when

they were at fault in the single-oak field? What a dead silence there was, while they spread themselves over the field."

"Do you remember," says he, "in what a style old Growler gave tongue, and how it went to your heart?"

I shall never forget it," says Bab, "and the dash we immediately made over the gate and across the fallow to farmer Paine's yard. What a fuss it put mother Paine in! Do you remember Tim Dawson's fall that day?"

"To be sure I do, and your laugh as you passed him by: — but Dawson's no bad rider; he had mounted a jade of farmer Littlejohn's which he knew nothing of; — I swore how it would be, when I saw him join the hounds. Do you remember Will Grove that day?"

"Yes," says Bab, "Will was well mounted: he is a fine fellow on horseback."

"Devilish fine fellow," quoth my Lord, "but he is an accomplished man, — he is one of the best shots in the county."

"Do you remember?" says Bab — and so they go on catechizing each other's

memory in detail through the whole season past, and anticipating many jovial deaths in that to come.

Can you conceive such an avarice of bliss? Surely they must be the happiest people upon earth, who can thus enjoy the past, the present, and the future all at once. But what is the oddest thing in the world to me is, that my sister, who has now heard this jargon for upwards of four years, is not worn out with it, nor has as yet entered the Vortex. To be sure, Mount Vernon is not deficient in other respects, and, after his dogs and horses, is kind enough to his wife, so kind indeed, that he never admits a dog into the house beyond the sporting parlour, where he sometimes breakfasts, or receives such of his sporting acquaintance as his own pride will not allow him to bring into the drawing-room. Out of the season he is rather attentive to her than otherwise, and upon the whole has, I believe, a very proper husband-like affection for her.

But it is time for me to acknowledge your letter from Dover and to tell you how

it happens that I am here. And first as to the unfortunate history of your father and Godfrey's aunt. — Certes, my dear Darrell, it is a most melancholy one ;— but why was it so ? It was not owing to the devotion of a lover, or the smiles of a mistress, which are things perfectly understood. — If a woman will not smile, her knight in time understands that she is not of the Vortex, and he feels himself bound in honour to bow and withdraw his pretensions. What would the most uxorious man have more ? I am sure that Mr. Saville would have been satisfied with it. But here comes a hot-headed stripling of a colonel, with a “Dam’me Sir, I must have my sister’s letter directly.” Who the devil would give it him ? — I never heard the particulars of the affair ; those catastrophes, however deep and commented upon at the time, soon lose their interest, and seldom survive a generation : — besides I went early abroad.

That business was certainly a bad one, but I can find no analogy in it with my devoirs to La Belle. — If she prove a Mrs.

Saville, I promise you, Darrell, that Godfrey shall have no reason to complain of me. — If she is what that peculiar smile of her's indicates, why should she not advance my reputation? In the name of wonder, why should you be so solicitous about her? If you were in habits of intimacy, I might account for it one way or the other. Are you really becoming a *Chevalier Preux*?

Your intentions respecting Saville are generous in the extreme, and, considering the fortune you possess, worthy of you. I long to hear how you are received. Godfrey knows nothing of your design, but he has been rather more communicative lately respecting his own intentions. Not having the remotest idea of Grove Park, he meditates settling Mr. Saville and his daughter at Woodlee. I now find that they are the relations, the expectation of whose arrival has prevented the usual removal to the Manor-house in Herefordshire on the prorogation of parliament.

I had hardly heard of these good

folks, and lately I hear of nothing else, though a profound silence is preserved on the circumstances that caused Mr. Saville to expatriate himself so many years. Mrs. Godfrey talks most enthusiastically of "my uncle and my cousin Augusta." Then "so long in Italy" is naturally followed by the young lady's being "an accomplished painter and an excellent musician," to which I begged leave to add sculpture, architecture, and *archaiology* — a Greek word for Rufus. La Belle put on one of those wicked smiles which I cannot help interpreting in my favour, and Rufus Palmer who was present transfused. By-the-bye, Rufus is become quite attached to me, and a hard word or two never fail to improve his fondness. He has got the whip-hand of me just now, as you shall hear, but I must first tell you that I have been trying to make a sinner of him, and find him an apt disciple ; — but he is not *aufait* yet.

I have made him ashamed of the stone figures in coats, waistcoats, and breeches, — stays, petticoats, shoes and stockings, in

the court and gardens of his place, yclept Hants Cottage, which were bequeathed to him by his father as fixtures to the said Hants Cottage. I made him observe that statues belonging to men of classical taste were never clothed.

“Truly Sir,” said Rufus as if suddenly struck, “no more they are, and I have sometimes blushed when I have been in company with ladies.”

“Did you ever see them blush at it?” said I.

“Truly no, but I have wondered that so modest a lady as Mrs. Godfrey could overcome such carnal exhibitions.”

“My worthy friend,” said I, “it has nothing to do with her modesty one way or the other — It is entirely a matter of custom. — Don’t you observe that the persons of men are more covered than the persons of women?”

“Truly so,” responded Rufus.

“Would not you blush to see our friend Godfrey with his shirt collar unbuttoned, and thrusting a naked shoulder out?”

“Doubtless, Mr. Vernon, doubtless.”

“ But you have no objection, have you, to look at Mrs. Godfrey’s arms, and her neck peeping from under a lace band — have you ? ”

“ Truly,” quoth Rufus, “ I can’t say.”

“ Not say ! That’s a copy of your countenance, Rufus.”

“ I vow, Mr. Vernon, you are in a comical humour.”

“ Aha ! Mr. Palmer, I see you are a sly one, I am talking merely of the effect of custom, and away goes your wicked imagination to beauty.”

“ Fie, Mr. Vernon, I had no such iniquitous thoughts.”

“ But to return to our subject,” continued I, “ you allow that there is nothing indecent in the ladies being less covered than men, provided the limits prescribed by modesty are attended to.”

“ Truly, I must allow that.”

“ Well, the same custom, which covers a living man all but his face and hands, and a living woman all but her face, hands, neck, and arms, has thought proper to leave marble statues still less covered ; — and nothing can be more absurd than to

make marble suits of clothes ; it is setting our statuaries to copy tailors instead of nature.—For Heaven's sake down with your breeched Vertumnuses and tuckered Pomonas."

"But then," quoth he, "the court and gardens would look so empty."

"Not at all ; you have plenty of trees, and shrubs, and flowers, which are the natural and proper ornaments of grounds, though, to show something of classical taste, I would have a few good copies of the Grecian statues placed here and there. Your grounds possess great capability : — it is a pity such points of beauty should not be drawn forth from the mass. — Now that I can take the liberty of a friend, I may tell you 'tis the general wonder, how a young man of such taste can think of leaving it in its present state."

"No ! you don't say so ! did Mrs. Godfrey ever make the remark ?"

This fellow is a downright Noddy, in love with La Belle, and does not know it : — but she does, and evidently does not like him the worse for it. I hardly think

she can return his passion, though the best of the Vortex have fantastic notions : and that she is in the Vortex her treatment of this sanctified booby convinces me, for if she has nothing else in view, she will make him marry some damsel of her choosing who may chance to have occasion for a fortune, perhaps her cousin Augusta. But to return to Rufus : —

“ Mrs. Godfrey !” said I, — “ to be sure, and all the world.”

“ The world is large, Mr. Vernon, but I wonder Mrs. Godfrey never hinted her opinion to me.”

“ Why you wicked rogue,” cried I, “ would you have a married woman — oh for shame !”

Rufus blushed like an autumn cyder apple.

“ Truly I thought no harm.”

“ Nay,” said I, “ I do not wish to confess you, but truly you do now and then betray some sinful thoughts, my friend.”

He ejaculated, “ The Lord forbid !”

“ That blush, Rufus,” said I, “ that blush speaks a very intelligent language ; — nay, don’t be ashamed of your taste.”

“ Upon my word, Mr. Vernon, I do think her a very fine lady, but —”

“ Come, come, none of your buts — if you wish to please her, I’ll tell you how.”

“ Who,” exclaimed he, turning up the whites of his eyes, “ would not like to please so sweet a lady, but I do declare —”

“ I see Palmer,” cried I, interrupting his declaration of innocence, “ I see that with a great deal of real taste you have little knowledge of the world ; I’ll take you under my tuition. — What say you ?”

“ Truly, you are very friendly : — my particular studies, I own, have been poetry and geology, subordinate to the holy writings, and I suspect that I do want some improvement in worldly manners : — I should truly be glad to make some tasteful alterations at Hants Cottage, such as would please a lady of Mrs. Godfrey’s judgment, because I am sure, and you may take my word for it, Mr. Vernon, she is as innocent as I am, or as you are yourself.”

I agreed with him, and not to over-

whelm you with Rufus too much at once, I will drop the remainder of our conversation, and confine the rest of my letter to a brief narrative. I walked round his place with him, dooming the fall of all the wooden and free-stone habiliments, whether enveloping shepherds or shepherdesses, haymakers or fluters. I marked out two other sites for creditable statues, and I pointed out where taste required the ground to be levelled,—where raised,—where there should be open space and display,—and where retirement and privacy : and I talked so convincingly on the subject, that he felt the absolute necessity of employing a landscape-gardener to give his premises the appearance which genius, and only genius, could find under the rough coating of nature,—as the diamond receives its brilliancy from the delicate cuts and angular touches of the lapidary. His fortune is large, and will bear some pulls from the hands of taste. He left the choice of the statues to me, and I ordered from London a *Venus Callipyges* for a grove, a *Faunus* for the lawn, and a *water-nymph* for the rivulet. They were

expected in a few days at Hants Cottage, and I was enjoying in imagination some new conversations with Rufus, which I thought would be necessary to enforce their establishment in their new domains, when I managed to manœuvre myself into a journey hither, *tête-à-tête* with Godfrey, leaving my pupil free to improve the unaccountable partiality La Belle has for him, which, if he really does not already see, he must soon discover, unless he be even more stupid than I take him to be.

You must know that a few days after I wrote last to you, letters arrived from the Savilles, in consequence of which I heard more of them than I had ever heard before, though not a word of what I afterwards became acquainted with on the receipt of your letter now before me. It appearing that Godfrey had time to go into Herefordshire before their arrival, preparations were made for the journey.—La Belle was to accompany him. Certain of this, I said I had an indispensable engagement with Mount Vernon, and became of course fixed for the excursion.

I completely over-reached myself, for I am certain neither Godfrey nor his wife would have planned such a trick for me ; but it turned out that, considering the matter well, it was decided that La Belle should remain at Woodlee. Well, I made the best of it, as I usually do ; being, as you know, the professed enemy of blue devils. — Godfrey is a good fellow and a pleasant companion, and I suspect we talked more on the road than we should have done, had I been bodkin. At Hereford we parted, Manor House and Mount Vernon lying on different sides of the city, so here I am, and you see with what company.

Lady Barbara has given me a fine account of the group you had at Bramblebear Hall ; — nor was she very nice in whispering her suspicions of Lady Betty, and — whom do you think ? No other than the gallant swain who *began* (only began, mind,) to think the Lady one of the Vortex. How could he leave Northamptonshire at such a beginning ? True, she is not “one of his beauties,” and though “her figure is perfect,” yet he

“ admires a different complexion.” I can tell him what he does not know, that her ladyship with all her demureness could not conceal her pique at his flight. By the way, I take it for granted you go again to Bramblebear Hall, on your return to England. If so, I’ll go with you, or perhaps you may find me there. — I shall not at present debate your character with you : — this is certain that you are a most unequal being, though I am sorry to see that the *sombre* part of you prevails more and more. Pray let your next letter be a gay one, and once more I conjure you to *eschew melancholy*.

Ever your’s,

L. VERNON.

P. S. I have this moment received the enclosed from my fond friend, Rufus ; — a treat, which I cannot withhold from you. He shall not want for my advice gratis.

LETTER XIV.

Rufus Palmer, Esq. to the Hon. Lewis Vernon.

Hants Cottage, Sept. 2.

DEAR MR. VERNON,

YOUR departure from Hants caused me much pain at the time, the improvement of our friendship having rendered our acquaintance very agreeable : but I more particularly felt the loss of your valued company yesterday, at the opening of the cases containing the statues, which arrived the daybefore. Oh friend ! friend ! I fear that taste and virtue are at war with each other : in spite of my endeavours to reason myself out of those prejudices which you convinced me were not participated by any of the learned, and but by few of the pious, — and we must make a distinction, for if all the pious are not learned, truly all the learned are not pious, — I did nevertheless feel a certain

shock when, in company with my sisters, whose impatience to judge of your taste there was no overcoming, — Martha our cook, and the other maids standing by, — when I say — my eyes first beheld the beautiful, I mean the unclothed, person of an indecent goddess, raised out of the case by our footman and a carpenter from Alton. I think the statuary must have mistaken the order you gave. — You evidently intended the figure to have some slight covering, but the deficiency of posterior drapery doth truly cause a comical feeling to the beholder; and Thomas and the carpenter bit their lips to prevent their laughing; — the maids did laugh, except Martha, who frowned and went away.

I own I was ashamed, yet Miss Palmer and my sister Kitty did not blush. “Nonsense,” cried Kitty, “as if it was any thing but stone.” But nevertheless, both my sisters went away, and with them the two maids, — which, you see, was showing by action that they thought it better to talk of taste than to see it; — for they both maintain your opinion, that

nature is superior to tailoring in works of art, though in works of real nature there is great room for display of taste by tailors, robe-makers, and fancy-gardeners. They discourse much in your style, and truly while discoursing, I incline to admit my feelings to be prejudices ; but there is an obstinacy in my sight that warreth against my better understanding, and maketh me withdraw mine eyes from this statue of Venus Calipyges, unless quite alone. — Though I must own it is most beautiful, and would be more so, if the drapery had not unfortunately been hitched on the goddess's shoulder, for after all, I must maintain with the poet, that, "want of decency is want of sense." But then, as you said, decency dependeth upon time and place. Now, perhaps when this beautiful statue is fixed in her place in the grove, and one hath seen her time after time, one may only be struck with the merit of the artist, and the nice touches of his chisel.

I have endeavoured to reason the maids out of their mirth, and the cook out of her

frown, saying to the former, there was nothing to laugh at, and to Martha that there was no impropriety or immorality in works of taste. — I had no occasion to reason with my sisters, they had all your reasoning by heart. In spite however of their conviction, and of the strong arguments you made use of, I did not feel comfortable upon the occasion of this Venus, and I resolved not to open the other cases till I consulted Mrs. Godfrey, knowing how you esteem her *taste* : — so I made Thomas and the carpenter transport the goddess into the washhouse, and leaving the others nailed up in the hall, I rode over to Woodlee, but was not lucky enough to see Mrs. G. It is the fourth time I have called since Mr. G. left home, and I have only seen her once. — I think it odd. — I never was refused admittance before. — I will go over again to-morrow, and I will leave this letter open to tell you what passeth.

Sept. 3. — Dear Mr. Vernon, — this Venus causeth me much evil. — Not that I have seen Mrs. Godfrey : — I was again denied admittance, the Lord knows why.

— I do wish I had seen her : — her opinions agreeing with your's would have helped to take off the impression made upon me by such an unexpected rebuke as I received from Martha this morning, in a manner that will amaze you. — I somehow got up rather early, I did conceive before any of the family were stirring ; descending the back-stairs, I walked without ever once thinking what I was about, straight into the wash-house — when, lo ! what think you I beheld ? Venus you say : — truly so, but it was Venus in a flannel petticoat, — a real flannel petticoat, — one of Martha's petticoats : — I know it is her's. I felt an evil spirit of anger rising within me at the presumption of my servant, and, without thinking what I was about, I began to take it off, when a voice, as if from the ceiling, called to me aloud, “ You had better leave it on, Mr. Rufus.”

The time of the morning, the quiet of the house, not a mouse stirring, not a breath of wind moving, the voice struck to my heart, as if I had been a culprit detected in his evil ways. But I soon

recovered myself; the wash-house door was open and I saw Martha go across the kitchen. I cannot tell why I did not speak to her: but, leaving the petticoat upon the beautiful statue, I hastened back to my chamber, where I staid till I was called to breakfast; —after which I went over to Woodlee as I told you, and came back without my errand.

And here I am, not knowing what to do, with my sisters calling for the opening of the other cases, Thomas and the housemaids perpetually grinning at one another, my cook watching the wash-house door, and Venus Callipyges in a flannel petticoat. The Lord have mercy upon me, and keep me in the right way!

Pray give me your advice, dear Mr. Vernon: — I shall let things remain as they are till I hear from you: — I know that your engagements with your brother the Right Honourable the Lord of Mount-Vernon will not allow you to leave Herefordshire at present, but a few lines from you will relieve my mind much, and in spite of Kitty's re-

— I do wish I had seen her. I do not be-
 lieve any of the notions agreeing with you. I
 helped to take off the burden of the journey,
 upon me by such an opportunity and her
 as I received from her family at Mount-
 in a manner that she looked sweetly
 somehow got up, and had her usual
 receive before. My sisters both send
 ring; describe — Write soon. I am,

ed without My dear Sir,

was about

when,

you

in

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Your obliged friend

and humble servant,

RUFUS PALMER.

LETTER XV.

Augusta to Angelica.

Paris. * * *

MY DEAR ANGELICA,

* * * * *

I HAVE drawn my pen through the first four pages of my letter, which were written more than a week ago, on the day after our arrival here, as they are but a repetition of what my father has been describing to the Marchese. He proposed a day of rest and letter-writing. — On reading his letter I would have torn mine, but he would not allow me : — you will see that it would have been no loss. However, on resuming my pen, I will not quit the lovely scenes of the country near Geneva without indulging the long contracted habit of opening my mind to my dearest Angelica, and showing her all that passes there. Yes, my sweet

sister, this friendship, this making over of our thoughts and feelings to each other, is, if not life itself, the great support and sweetener of it. Indeed I am never so conscious of my existence as when I am communicating my sentiments to one, who receives them as you do, and repays my love and confidence with her own. The superiority of a married life must, I think, consist in this mutual complete unbosoming of the heart which that tie is formed and evidently intended to produce : I say this, in spite of the many, many instances, that we ourselves have known and heard of, of marriages where no such friendship existed ; — and to observe to you, that possessed of it, as we are, without marriage, I feel armed against the delusions of hope, and never will admit the thought of becoming a wife without complete conviction that I am wooed on this principle. I am content with my Angelica's heart, and the being, who aspires to share my affection with her, must possess a heart like her's.

Now, be it known to you that this

leads to my informing you of my having had the misfortune to have a lover since I arrived on this side the Alps. How many would call me absurd for using the word, misfortune; but you understand me, Angelica, and will not think me so. The man that seriously proffers his heart cannot be an object of contempt in that, and it must therefore be painful to be obliged to tell him that the highest gift any one has it in his power to bestow is not thought worthy of acceptance. It is a pity that men will not discover what the event must be, which I think is so easily to be done, and spare unpleasant feelings on both sides. As for persevering lovers, and many-conquering damsels, they are to me incomprehensible characters. — Love, or if you please, the continuation of it, depends, in my opinion, so entirely upon a return of affection, that I should as soon expect frost in summer, and warmth from ice, as love in a rejected suitor. But the thing exists, and therefore the defect is in my comprehension, or rather let me say, my dear Angelica, that it is owing to the

manner in which we have been instructed, to the sentiments which have been instilled into our minds from infancy.

I remember my mother well, her delicate form, her pale countenance, and enchanting smile : I fancy that I see my dear Marchesa, my second mother, in youth and beauty such as her slim form and intelligent countenance still indicate, sitting by her side and talking of us ; — I recall, or imagine I recall, the expression of their principles : — no wonder I should imagine this as they have been so invariably, so impressively inculcated by the beloved survivor. There may be, and there no doubt are, national distinctions of character arising from national distinctions of education, but in this neither the Marchesa nor my own mother could be said to be of any country, and principle they knew ought to be the same in all. — If our Marchesa has made me an Italian in some things, she has made my dear Angelica an Englishwoman in others ; — such at least as the character has been painted to us. If the passions are more uncontrolled in

one country than another, it is not because they are uncontrollable by nature more in the one than in the other, but because the regulation of them is neglected in early life.

In Italy particularly, but not only in Italy, the romance of a goddess and god of love is by no means antiquated, and it is only to the wild worship of these I can attribute all the modern follies we hear of its effects, and among others that of the *persevering* votary. People of common sense will never think of uniting themselves without reciprocal attachment; but, says the lover, permit me to endeavour to gain your love. — That “permit me” is the inconsistency itself: — the woman who permits the endeavour consents to the proposal: — C’est une affaire finie, as the French say.

As for conquering damsels who deem a list of lovers necessary to their reputation, they are nothing more than coquettes, a character contemptible enough, but something still worse. — If the gratification of their vanity were all one might be satisfied with a laugh, but the injury they do is serious. If the

admirer does not break his heart, he is associated by custom, (an unjust one to be sure,) in the ridicule attached to rejected suitors; and the heart that has been refused by one is rendered of less value to another. I am sure we are not prudes, Angelica, yet I cannot but think the attempt to gain a man's heart for the gratification of vanity a crime, and that she who wilfully uses her attractions, be those what they may, to create love, should be considered as legally engaged to the person, and as dishonoured, if she practises her power on more than one. The very premeditation of conquest indeed is degrading.

We have both had the misfortune (I must repeat the word) to refuse the offers of our acquaintance, but with what pain ! It has never entered my thought to gain from any man more than a pleasant interchange of civility; on the contrary I have been greatly on my guard to prevent any man from suspecting me of an artifice so mortifying. This mode of thinking I owe originally to the Marchesa, but is completely made my own

by all the power I possess of reasoning. Why is it that what is so much coveted by the generality of our sex should create in me a painful sensation? I mean admiration. I know what my Angelica's answer will be; — that it is an ill compliment to the understanding, and indicates that personal qualities are the chief distinction of a woman. There is masculine beauty as well as feminine; but is a man ever made to perceive that he is admired for it? and why not? Because it is not the chief distinction on which he piques himself. And is it with us? Oh! it is as great a weakness in a female bosom as in a man's. It is because I feel it to be so, that it creates some degree of shame in me when I perceive that a man's eyes are more than commonly occupied in scrutinizing my person.

* In reading this sentiment you will readily recollect how little I prize the portion of good looks which nature may have given me, or rather how I have learned to prize it properly; for not to value it at all would be nearly as weak as to value it alone or principally. My

Angelica then will not think me in danger of being vain when I talk to her of admiration and of a lover. There is a chivalrous, and I think just and natural deference shown by men to the female character, with which every woman must be pleased, and which she ought to repay by showing her sense of it; but this is very different, and it is my opinion that the man who begins to make his passion known by marked personal admiration introduces his suit with an insult. And now, my dear Angelica, for love and Geneva, or, for the sake of the sound, love and the Lake.

It seems that visiting that part of Switzerland has long been a passion of my countrymen. — Indeed it well deserves its celebrity, but I found that one of the greatest charms it possessed was that it gave birth, not to J. J. Rousseau, but to his ideal generation.

There is at present there a young Englishman of family and fortune whose name is Dartford, who leads a singular life. — Though of pleasant and apparently of social manners, he passes all his time alone

in contemplating the remarkable parts of the country, their histories, and their legends: the poor follow him and bless him; the rich he excludes. He was accidentally introduced to our party one day, when my father staid at home to write letters, by our banker Mr. Pollen, who had previously given us some idea of his character. He was walking at some distance from the town on the side of the lake; — he had a small book in his hand, which when Mr. Pollen accosted him he closed, keeping his finger in it as if intending to continue his reading. — Though he spoke to him he looked at me: — his countenance is strong and marked, and the head altogether one that a painter would select for a story on canvass. He kept his eyes so long fixt upon me, that though not unprepared for a scrutiny, Mr. Pollen having warned us of his habit, I felt my face flush. — He must have seen my distress, but without removing the cause of it, he put his book into his pocket, and remarking that there was room in our carriage, begged permission to join us. It was of course granted, and he passed.

the day with us in our excursion on the side of the lake, opposite to that along which we had travelled in our journey to Geneva. He soon discovered himself to be a man of cultivated mind, but romantically enthusiastic, and viewing things with that fervour of imagination which, magnifying ideal existences, degrades the common and necessary realities of life.

The book he had been reading was Rousseau's novel. — The madness with which that unhappy man was afflicted is surely of a contagious nature, and I am certain, with our dear mother, that it is better for healthy minds to avoid the risk of contagion. This young man is evidently infected. He described, he painted with rapture the places — the scenes which Rousseau had animated with the persons of his book : from his language one might imagine them superior to Paradise itself, and that nothing ever equalled Vevai, Clarens, and the rocks of Meillérie. At Clarens, undying Love, the God — I told you that Cupid and Venus had survived all the other ancient gods and goddesses — had fixed his

immortal throne ; there it was that he was married to Psyché, and there it was that all nature paid him homage, from man down to the very trees which “ take root in love.” There “ they who had never loved would learn to love, and they who had loved would love the more.”

Upon the whole, I think our excursion was rendered more pleasant by the company of our accidental companion, and perhaps I appeared to him to think so, but he could not dive into my mind to distinguish the nature of the pleasure it felt, — which was of that kind excited by the perusal of some interesting romance, fabulous drama, or epic fiction. — It was a *Tancred*, an *Orestes*, or a *Rinaldo* : — I never once thought of Mr. Dartford.

He, it seems, was not of that opinion. He called upon us the next day. — My father was gone to Mr. Pollen's, and I was waiting his return to accompany me to Ferney. My hero of the day before coming in the meantime, asked for me, and did not wait to be announced, so that I suddenly found myself alone with him in our sitting-room.

“ We had a pleasant day yesterday,” said he, as he advanced without the least ceremony ; — heroes never bow ; — “ but I come to persuade you to a much pleasanter excursion : where is Mr. Saville ? ” — I told him. — “ Is he easily persuaded ? ” said he : — “ I will stay with you till he comes back. — He must be persuaded. — How could you think of passing through Clarens and Vevai like common post-towns, and not stop a day or two to pay your devotion at the shrine of *Julie* ? How could you, yesterday, with your horses’ heads towards Meillérie, not push forward to stand, once at least, in that immortal shelter of pure love ? We must visit it together.”

“ You are very ardent,” said I, “ in favour of those places, but I do not attach the honour and the interest to them that you do ; yet I saw enough of the country you idolize, to think it justly entitled to admiration.”

“ Beautiful ! beautiful ! ” cried he ; “ but their chief interest arises from their association with Wolmar’s family : — a noble husband superior to jealousy, pure and

disinterested love, and female friendship devoid of envy ; — Julia and Clara, no doubt, were uppermost in your thoughts as you past through their country.”

“ I am very little acquainted,” said I, “ with the characters of the persons you are so enraptured with ; I have merely heard them spoken of, and rather unfavourably ; but at all events I agree in opinion with one of our most celebrated poets, who thinks that if Rousseau had never written, those scenes would have been equally romantic ; that he has added to the interest of his works by their adoption, and that they have done for *him* what no human being could do for *them*.”

“ Is it possible,” cried he, “ that you have never read Rousseau’s work ?”

“ Very possible,” replied I.

“ What, in the name of wonder, are you doing here then ?”

“ I am on my way with my father to England.”

“ For Heaven’s sake be more what your features and person indicate ; I have often seen *Julie* in imagination ; I never saw her with my eyes till yesterday, and

they were upon her the whole day. I was struck with the resemblance on the first glance I took, and was impelled by the feeling it excited to know more of her. I never thought of the intrusion till I lost sight of her. You surely cannot be an every-day creature."

"I am indeed, and wish to be nothing else."

"I don't believe, I won't hear you say so. Why, I never heard any woman talk as you did yesterday of the passage over the Alps."

"I talked as I felt; I am a lover of nature."

"A lover of nature, and not of Jean Jaques!"

"From all I have learned respecting Rousseau, he must have been a madman or a villain, and I would rather think the former with the sublime bard, whose sentiments I have already quoted, who says,

' But he was phrenzied by disease or woe,
To that worst pitch of all, which wears a reasoning
show.'

"His character," I continued, "seems to have been drawn in the same poem by

a masterly hand ;— I advise you to read it. The poet makes him more particularly mad when he wrote a work which I have read, or rather heard read,—his *Social Contract*; and I shall never forget the remark that was made at the time by one of my friends present, — that the lunatic, not satisfied with vending poison wholesale to the destruction of nations, had prepared it in sugared pills for private families.”

“ Poor Rousseau ! what a violent enemy has he in the only woman that ever gave me an idea of his Julie ! But I must set you right. Whatever may be your opinion of his political work, it is clear that you are unacquainted with the spirit of his *Nouvelle Eloise*, as you own that literally it is unknown to you.”

“ Literally I own, for I have not read it, but I believe I am not ignorant of the spirit of it : I have heard comments upon it by friends of whose judgment I have the highest opinion.”

“ Believe me, he is misunderstood : I know his book has been represented as dangerous to virtue.”

“ If I am not misinformed,” said I, “ he represents it so himself.”

“ There again ;” cried he, —“ a weak preface is turned into a weapon against one of the finest efforts of genius by which a single error is atoned for by a long life of virtuous love.”

“ It should have been atoned for by a life of rigid penitence.”

“ I must, I shall convince you ; but I am more interested at present to know how long you are likely to be here?”

“ I believe a very few days longer : we are travellers, as I told you, on our way to England.”

“ There,” said he, “ no doubt to fulfil a happy engagement and bless your lover?”

I was much displeased at this liberty, and looked as I felt. “ Nay, do not be angry,” said he, “ you have no right to be so. If you will but reflect, above form as you are, you will make some allowance for a man who wishes to ascertain the freedom of your mind.”

“ I am astonished,” replied I, “ at this conversation from a perfect stranger.”

He stopped me : — “ A stranger ! and can you call me a stranger after such a day as yesterday ? Well ! I will be corrected. In urging the shortness of your stay as an apology for this precipitancy, I trust you will permit me in England to lose the distinction of a stranger.”

I said that I had no right to permit, and begged that so embarrassing a conversation might be dropped.

“ I will obey you,” said he ; “ and, conscious that, after the declaration I have made, my presence would be an annoyance to you in your enjoyment of this charming country, you shall see me no more here. I leave you ; give me but the rose in your hand to console me for my loss of your company.”

To ask the flower which I happened to have taken up when he came in, was but an artful mode of repeating his request to be considered as my lover. It was quite in his style. “ You cannot but know,” said I, “ that insignificant as giving the flower would be in itself, it cannot now be considered so.” He bowed, said that even this but the more

confirmed his prepossessions of yesterday, and wishing me a pleasant journey home and happiness through life, he smiled and left me.

My father returned soon after, and I told him all that had passed, upon which he observed that it was absurdly premature, but quite consistent with the character he had that morning been hearing of him, which was a very high one: his principles were unexceptionable; he was well informed and accomplished, but governed by a romantic imagination which rendered him singular. This was all my father said: he did not recommend him to my thoughts, but neither did he caution me, which plainly showed that he had no objection to him if I had none. Objection! I have no objection to this young man: in spite of his romance he is sensible and amiable; but is this a reason for marrying? I have already told my dear Angelica the only ground on which I will ever think of changing my state. — That ground, Mr. Dartford does not possess, and I am determined not to be dazzled by the brilliant quali-

ties which usually sway the heart. If I have any beauty, I will not barter it for admiration; a correspondent soul, a full and faithful confidence of mind can alone promise a life of happiness; these preliminaries including good sense, I should not be very fastidious as to the brilliant endowments and accomplishments so often made the only objects of matrimony. Good sense, good humour, habitual cheerfulness, an affectionate heart, and unbounded confidence, are the real jewels which a woman should look for in a husband.

And now, if you please, my dear Angelica, we are in Paris. I was greatly pleased in entering France, particularly with the *Cote d'Or*, but to you, whose eyes are familiar with the most beautiful vineyards and abundant corn-fields, description would be a work of supererogation.— So come at once with me to the capital. Of Paris I have much to say: who could be a week in it and not have much to say? But my letter is already long, and there are still more calls on my curiosity than I shall have time to satisfy,

as we shall now very soon set out for the country that gave me birth, which, the nearer, I approach it, augments in my heart a feeling far, far beyond the passion of curiosity, — a desire to see that land of which I have heard so much, — to be in the midst of a nation whose virtues and whose prowess have saved the world, whose laws are an example to enlightened governments, and whose habits in private life are sources of domestic happiness. To be in the midst of them and feel myself one of them! —

My Angelica has ever been among the foremost to extol Britain, and she will not be jealous of the sentiments which a near approach to it calls forth from her Augusta. Signa and the lovely vale of Arno have ever been dear to me, and ever will: the feeling they produce is tenderness; they raise fond recollections and affections, — recollections and affections not associated with Britain, as I was so young when I left it; but we have followed her history, we have read her authors, we have delighted in tracing the lives of her distinguished

characters, and we have been grateful to her for the return of peace, — sources of a just pride. — Yes, Angelica, I am proud of my country : — you too are proud of your friend's country, — you are half a Briton. We will have two countries ; — we will live in both : — my dear Marchesa has promised to come for me : — we will divide our time between England and Italy ; — we cannot, we will not be separated long.

*Tutto con te mi piace,
Sia colle, o selva, o prato ;
Tutto é soggiorno ingrato
Lungi, amica, da te.*

Leaving then for another opportunity, my remarks on the general objects of curiosity, I will conclude my letter with subjects I know to be more interesting to my dear Angelica, — such as more immediately concern her friends ; and I have to communicate a most unexpected occurrence in the life of my father which has just taken place.

You are but too well acquainted, my love, with my dear mother's melancholy

story, and my father's loss of the family-estate in Northamptonshire, in consequence of the vindictive spirit of the late Lady Darrell. How surprised will you be to hear that, from a spirit of a contrary nature reigning in the heart of her son, it is likely to return into his possession ! The young Sir Francis Darrell is at present in Paris. I have seen him twice, — first at a ball before I knew who he was, and afterwards, — the next day, when he called upon my father ; but this was scarcely three minutes, for my entrance seemed to be the signal for his departure. He did not even speak to me, — he hardly looked at me ; nor should I be able to remember his face, had I not noticed it particularly the evening before.

You know how I am always struck with features that bear the impression of character, whether in high or low life, in marble or on canvass. This habit, no doubt, I have acquired from my attachment to the study of heads in painting : — it is an agreeable acquirement, as it often furnishes subject for thought. I first saw Sir Francis as he stood speaking to a gen-

SIR FRANCIS DARRELL.

tleman at a little distance from a which I was one of the dancers. a good opportunity of viewing his tenance without his observing me. it is a very striking one, and I should have noticed it had the head been on the shoulders of a *piscatore* in a boat at Livorno, instead of an English baronet in a ball-room at Paris.

The description of features cannot convey a resemblance; the few terms we have for expressing them cannot adapt themselves to that infinite variety which is one of the wonders of nature. They mark not character; —character marks them:—we may see two faces with precisely the same features, and they shall be so distinguished by the difference of the spirits which animate them, as to have no striking resemblance.

Sir Francis has a high forehead, more exposed on one side than on the other, over which hang curls of dark hair; his eye-brows and eye-lashes are of the same colour, yet his eyes are blue, which is extraordinary, and but for the character thrown into them by his

spirit would be insipid. Blue eyes are out of place, except in a fair complexion, which his is not. I have no time to describe the nose—it is not Roman, it is not Grecian, but approaching to the latter, distinct and prominent: his lips are well turned, and as pliant as his brows. He rarely smiled; but I once or twice could perceive that he had fine teeth.—His chin is proportioned and terminates an oval *contour*. If I add small ears, a manly bust, and a slim and elegant figure; will you not say that this is the language of an enamoured damsel? No; Angelica will not say so; she knows it is not, and that Augusta does not fall in love with every fine face she sees. And how could she fall in love with this, well composed as it is, when its animation bespeaks a soul so equivocal—that of an angel, or of a demon? There is an air, an inexpressible property, that betokens greatness of soul and amiable affections; but there are alternate signals of conscious depravity, and of remorse eating up his heart for

crimes which he can find no means to expiate.

Such was the view I took of Sir Francis Darrell at Madame Penevaux's entertainment; and before I knew his name. I was dancing when he advanced to the set I was in. On returning to my place, I again sought him with my eyes; — he was standing directly opposite to me with his fixed on me, and I of course withdrew mine. I observed that he remained some time; but I too well knew what was due to myself to let him perceive that I was studying his features. When the country-dances were over and the waltzing began, I joined Madame Penevaux, from whom I learned his name. Imagine, Angelica, how I was struck at it, and how much more, when mentioning him to my father, he told me that he expected to see him at our hotel the following day. He had not communicated it to me before, as there was a kind of mystery in the appointment, which had been made by himself, assuming at the time the character of another person. This I have

since found to have proceeded from delicacy, as he justly imagined that an abrupt introduction of the name would be a shock.

Having learned who he was, I naturally wished to complete my observation:—I saw him several times during the night; but though he must have known who I was, he never made the slightest advance; on the contrary, he seemed to shun me. I resolved to see him next day, and I told my father that I would join them before he went away. I have told you how he behaved; and were I a young lady who piqued myself upon my beauty, I think I have said enough to convince you that I must have been very much mortified. If he was not absolutely rude, he was what a damsel's self-love might call so: but the greatness of the act which brought him to our hotel, and which I believe brought him from England, soon effaced such petty considerations from my mind. He had planned a resignation of Grove Park to my father, in a manner not to hurt his feelings. The noble part which I had

fancied in his nature predominated, and I told my father what I thought. He was of my opinion, and I conceived myself mistaken in the other indications of his physiognomy.

We continued talking of him and of Grove Park for some time, and were still blowing up the flame of admiration, when comes a letter from my cousin Godfrey, to cool our enthusiasm — and prove me a Lavater. Yes, Angelica, I am right : — Sir Francis Darrell, with a few brilliant virtues, is all that his bent brow and self-inverted eye proclaim. My cousin says that there are horrid stories told of him, and that he is not received in scrupulous society. This letter has quite disconcerted our feelings respecting this young man and his intentions in regard to Grove Park. It is very desirable to recover a family-estate ; but it is a different thing to lie under obligations to one whom we cannot respect. My father means to act on this occasion with caution — and, however provoking the disappointment after such unlooked-for hope, it is perhaps better altogether as

it is :—Grove Park is too near to Belmont Lodge. Whatever way the affair terminates you shall have an account of it.

I shall now bring my letter to a close ; but I must first tell you of another extraordinary *rencontre*. As I was crossing the garden of the Tuilleries with Count de B., I was accosted by Mariana Gaza. I was really very glad to see her, and told her where we lodged. — She came to see me the next day and made many kind enquiries about your family, and the Olivastros. She has been settled in Paris with her husband about a year, and they carry on a commerce in lace and other articles of dress. I am going this very day to spend a few louis with her.

Adieu, my dearest sister ; kiss my mother for me, and also my dear Marchesa, and ever love

Your

AUGUSTA.

P. S. We shall leave Paris very soon : I therefore hope that you have addressed your letters direct for England.

LETTER XVI.

Mr. Saville to Mrs. Godfrey.

WITH what feelings, my dearest Caroline, do I now anticipate the delight of taking you into my arms, and of encircling my beloved Augusta in yours!

At a distance, — without expectation, — without hope, the mind habituates itself to a pleasing contemplation and calm enjoyment of friendship, and of affections, which resemble the love we continue to feel for those already transferred to a better world, when our vivid emotions have been subdued by time. Limited beings as we are, we think of them as denied to our sight, as removed from our embrace, and we go about our daily business, seeking the enjoyments within reach. How different when we approach the objects of our affection, and united hope and anticipation become certainty. Thought kindles into a kind

of reality, and produces a restlessness till we are satisfied. It is what I feel at this moment, and I have taken up the pen to tell you that we shall quit Paris the day after to-morrow, and hardly stop to take rest till we find it at Woodlee.

George says right, Caroline; it is not likely that I shall know your features and person; but I well remember what they were when I used to take you upon my knee at eight years old and praise your intelligent countenance; and well do I remember how I loved you:—your features may be changed, but my heart is not: nor probably is my person so much as to be out of your recollection;—your's was the age for remembrance.—You have a little Caroline for me too, in whom, George tells me, I shall easily trace you; and I have an Augusta for you, in whom you will recollect her mother, with whom you were so fond to stay at Grove Park.

You give me another child in your's; I bring you a sister in mine. Oh! how you will love her! She is beautiful, Caroline; she is loveliness itself;

— but beauty is not always amiable, however prepossessing : — it is not for her beauty that I say you will love her ; — but for the goodness of her heart, — for the winning softness of her manners, — for the affection she will bestow upon you.

Accomplished as she is beautiful, you will not wonder to hear that she has attracted lovers ; but you will probably wonder when I tell you that she has never excited envy or jealousy among her female friends ; — and most of those too are of a country extremely addicted to the latter passion. You will find this accounted for by the humility of her pretensions, by her repugnance to all display, by the delight she takes in seeing other girls admired, by the praises she bestows upon them ; in short, by that secret and never-failing charm of making others pleased with themselves.

Her understanding is strong, but of that too she makes no display ; — it is always seen in her conduct, but it is only detected in her conversation ; for while it gratifies men of sense, none feel it other

than on a par with their own ; — such a sweet unaffected deference does she appear to show for the opinion of others. She is very fond of music, and few sing or play better than she does ; it may be said to be natural to her, as it is to most of the children in the country where she has lived from her infancy : but she is fond of it, as the Italians are, for its own sake, and not as an accomplishment. The same of painting ; her portfolios will delight you ; but it will be to please that she will take pleasure in opening them, not for the praise of an artist. A better regulated spirit does not exist.

I think I hear you say, this is a picture drawn by a doating father ; — well ! you will soon be able to judge for yourself, and in the meantime I know you will like to read these effusions even of such a father ; and I shall continue to indulge myself on a theme so sweet to my heart, but which can only be allowed when writing to such near and dear relations. She is gone out with her maid to make some purchases preparatory to our departure, and I have nothing better to

do ; — I *can* have nothing better to do, my dear Caroline.

Augusta was hardly old enough to be sensible of the loss of her mother, yet she has given many proofs of her remembrance of her ; and from her infancy she has evinced a great faculty of discrimination as well as of memory. — She would fain persuade herself that she remembers you and George at Grove Park.

You already know how much she is indebted to the Marchesa de Pisani for her education. The Marchesa and her mother were affectionately attached to each other : — mutual esteem was never more justly bestowed ; — a sister could not have wept more than did the survivor at the loss of her friend, from whom she received her child as her own. Both she and her husband are pious, but not bigoted, as the little grove at Signa, mentioned in my letter to George, has shown you ; and with a sincere attachment to the general principles of the religion she professes, I am certain she considers some of the doctrines ostensibly retained as antiquated : — she talks,

for instance, of meeting her friend in a happier state.

The Marchesa is a most amiable woman, and possesses a delicacy of mind not surpassed by the purest of the British character. — To her virtues, her good sense, and extensive acquirements do I owe such a daughter as I have described Augusta. She approved and imbibed many of her dying friend's sentiments; she adopted her modes of instruction, and, contrary to the customs of her country, — I believe I may say contrary to the customs of all countries, — made the brilliant parts of education secondary to that of the heart. She completely succeeded in both with her truly loved charges, Augusta and her own Angelica.

These girls, extremely alike in mind and accomplishments, are not unlike in person. They resemble each other in all that habits influence, and something in points independent of those; the same smile, the same manner, the same disinterested preference of others, the same fond attention to their parents: their persons

too resemble, and in some degree their complexions; but Angelica's, with the whole turn of her countenance, indicates her country, as I think Augusta's does her's. They love each other, and it is a great pity to separate them. They have both been addressed by lovers, but neither seems inclined to marry. I am not surprised at this in Augusta, for though I have a great regard for many of my Italian acquaintances, I think that whenever she makes a choice it will be in England. She would not, however, listen to an elegant young Englishman, named Dartford, whom we met at Geneva, one whom, from the account given me by Pollen, my banker, I should not have thought unworthy of consideration, though he is rather romantic in his disposition, and certainly too hasty in his declaration: but as we were upon the wing, his haste is perhaps not much to be wondered at. Though pleased with the fellow for admiring my girl, I said nothing to influence her. I shall always leave her to her own good sense, which I am certain will be the best

guide in her choice, whenever it takes place.

While I am thus indulging myself in a full introduction of my Augusta to her already loved Caroline, she is not herself thoughtless of her cousin: — you were the subject of our conversation when she went out, and she is probably at this moment thinking of you, and purchasing some Paris gifts for your little Caroline; — she said she would: — but I expected her back before this. — She is probably indulging an old Italian acquaintance with a gossip on Florentine subjects, or she may be gone to Penevaux's. — I have not exhausted my topic, and I shall go on till she comes: — she cannot now be long.

Such a child is a never-failing theme to a father's thought, — a never-failing source of joy to his heart. Caroline, I cannot tell you how I love her; yet not more, believe me, than she deserves; — and to her own merits add a fund of happiness which I never expected to enjoy. — And when I think that, in spite of her father's misfortunes, she possesses

means sufficiently adequate to all the desires of so contented a mind to prevent the necessity of consulting the advantages of fortune in the disposal of her hand, I cannot be too grateful to Providence, who, if he afflicts in some things, blesses in others. I will not then regret the loss of affluence ; but there is nothing wrong in wishing it for such a daughter ; — and I must own to you, Caroline, that I had begun to build a fine castle in the air after my interview with young Darrell : — I even talked with Augusta as if I had already made her the mistress of Grove Park ; — she was pleased to hear me, but without being elated ; and when George's letter so soon shook my castle, she felt it so little, that, seeing how pleased I had been with the prospect for her, she entreated me to be cautious how I incurred obligations to such a character as Sir Francis Darrell. “ We are happy as we are,” she said, “ why wish for splendour ? or for any addition that may create the smallest change of our happiness ? ” No, my dear Caroline, I would not endanger our hap-

piness for the wealth of princes, nor purchase Grove Park with a single regret of my Augusta's. — Are we not happy? Are we not going to increase our happiness at Woodlee? What would I more?

It is near six o'clock, our dinner hour, and Augusta is not come in. — I am rather uneasy. — Madelena, her maid, is with her. —

The clock has struck:—I am extremely uneasy, — yet what accident could possibly have happened without my hearing it immediately, as she has our carriage, and a man to attend, whom she could send home?

Victore, our *valet de place*, is returned, and tells me the carriage is waiting for her at Penevaux's. — After leaving the lace-shop, she got out at the gate of the

Tuilleries, and Madelena directed them to go and take her up at Penevaux's. —

Here she is. — I hear the carriage. —

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LETTER XVII.

Monsieur Penevaux to Mr. Saville.

DEAR SIR,

OBSERVING your carriage to be waiting in my court at so late an hour, I asked your coachman why he was there: — he said, for Miss Saville, who had ordered him to take her up at my house. I enquired, and find that she has not been here to-day, nor does Madame Penevaux expect her. There is evidently some mistake; — I hope there is no accident. — I will call early upon you to-morrow.

I am,

Your's faithfully,

PENEVAUX.

Thursday.

LETTER XVIII.

Sir Francis Darrell to the Hon. Lewis Vernon.

A SLEEPING beauty in the wood! — By Jove! a sleeping beauty in the wood! — But I must not spoil my story; — it is positively a romance, and a romance I must make it. So, Sir, “ Scarcely had ruddy Phoebus displayed his brilliant golden locks from the chambers of the East, enlightening the vast hemisphere, adorned by the superb capital of France; the little songsters of the groves, variegated with a thousand glittering colours, were still preluding their melodious compliments to the vermilion-glowing Aurora, when already the noble, the invincible, the courteous knight, Sir Francis Darrell of Belmont, his heart swoln with his high destinies, disdaining shameful sloth and unmanly soft repose, had left his vainly-inviting couch to meet the

brilliant god of day, and scour the surrounding woods and valleys, putting to flight iniquitous marauders, and rescuing beauties in distress."——

This style I think might do very well ; but there is romance enough in the thing itself without the stilts of La Mancha's knight ; and I will descend, premising to your honour, that none of that extraordinary champion's extraordinary adventures can vie with that of your humble-servant, which he is about to detail.

You see, my dear Vernon, that I have at least begun my letter gaily, be the conclusion of it what it may. You judge rightly of the progress of my mind ; — gloom predominates, and every day I live brings some fresh proof of the horror of the system under which we exist. What a detestable creature is civilized man ! The cannibal eats the body of his fellow-man ; but that only when he looks upon him as an open enemy, or as one of a tribe with whom he has no communion ; — but social man gnaws into the very soul of his neighbour, and without compunction condemns his acknowledged friend to a

life of torture for his own gratification. — I have begun my letter indeed in a gay strain, but the subject of that gaiety was meant for a tragedy, and is the immediate motive of these reflections.

We may be designated *laughing monsters*, if monster means something hugely incongruous : — we laugh in the midst of horrors ; we laugh when we should weep ; we laugh at every thing ; we laugh at nothing ; — no other brutes laugh ; all others look pleased or displeased at Nature's dictate ; but that huge brute, man, is endowed with a supernumerary faculty to insult the distress and mock the failings of his kind. He robs his companion at the gaming-table and laughs at him ; — he seduces his wife and laughs at him ; — he runs away with his daughter and laughs at him. If he fails in his attempts in these particulars, the tables are turned, and they laugh at him ; — or they shoot one another. Glorious creature ! So triumph ! Dash away, ye lords of the globe, which nothing stops in her orbit ! — Why let any thing stop you in your course ? If a woman denies you, poison her — if a

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man says you shall not, murder him. — Can any thing speak plainer the nature of man than criminal codes and officers of police? Well! submit we must to these superior agents; and so compelled to stay a day or two longer in Paris, you shall have my adventure from the spot.

Having completed the object of my journey, — tired of seeing Goselin twirl her airy limbs, and weary of the stale repetitions of *social* life, I left Paris the day before yesterday, just after receiving your letter, dated at Mount Vernon, which I did not intend to answer before I arrived at Brighton. I wished to loiter the rest of the day at St. Germain, the forest of which had more than once unexpectedly presented associations to my mind that occupied me more congenially and more agreeably, — for “horrors now are not displeasing to me,” — than all that the gay round of the gayest city in the world could do.

I slept at St. Germain, and intending to reach Rouen early the next day, I ordered my carriage at daylight. I took

Aaron in, who, roused earlier than usual, soon re-closed his eyes and his senses upon a world as little worthy his observation as his master's. After a time. I shut my own, but not to sleep; — to turn them inwardly upon the objects of memory, some of which are so very vivid at times, that I come to myself with a kind of involuntary admonition that “madness lies that way.”

I was completely lost in a probing reverie, and had half argued myself into the belief of a devil at least, when I thought I was thrown all at once into his clutches, without ceremony: but feeling Aaron under me, and conceiving that he stood some chance of being in better quarters, I soon perceived that I had not fallen quite so low as Pandemonium, notwithstanding the repeated vociferation of *Diab! Diab!* — ejaculations, however, not unsuitable to the *infernal* event, which was nothing less than a complete *renversement* of the chariot. The postilion, caring as little for the world as Aaron, and having been as early roused, had, with equal indifference, but less

innocence, addressed himself to that happy oblivion which composes the tolerable half of life. I had trusted to him ; — he trusted to equally faithful creatures ; — perhaps they were sleepy too ; — I am sure they no more meant to break my neck than the postillion did ; but untaught to distinguish between a level and a mound, and ignorant of the chariot's centre of gravity, they lodged it on its side, rolling the master over the man. I scrambled out as well as I could, and would have cursed the fellow, if cursing would have done any good ; but the poor creature looked sufficiently confounded, and our dilemma rather required that I should raise than depress his spirits. I made him assist in taking Aaron out, who had received a hurt on the arm, that gave him great pain. This appeared to me at the time to be the worst part of the accident, for the carriage was so little damaged, that had we been able to raise it, we might have proceeded immediately to Poissy, which was not above two miles off : but the Fates were at work, and had Hercules,

or Big Ben himself been there, we should not have set things to rights, till I had performed their behests: for the digestion of which I presume you have by this time gained a tolerable appetite, and I will no longer tantalize you.

After waiting a little with the hope of assistance from some chance travellers, I began to be impatient, and looking round, I perceived what I supposed a habitation, at no great distance, almost hid among trees. Any thing was better than kicking my heels in waiting, and I resolved to go up to it to ask for help. The postillion knew nothing of the place, but said there was a narrow road a little farther on which led into the back country. I went as much for amusement as for assistance, having ordered Aaron to make use of the first advantage he could obtain by passengers, to put the chariot on its wheels, and, after examining if they could be trusted, to bring it to the little road, and wait there for me.

I suppose I might have walked nearly a quarter of an hour, sometimes losing sight and sometimes catching a short glimpse of

the place I had seen, before I came close enough to distinguish that it was nothing but a thick wall, which evidently had once made a part of a substantial building. Going round it I saw that a poor shed had been built to it : — a door fronted me with a window near it. The key was on the outside, which made me suppose that somebody was within. I tapped — no answer was given. — I looked in at the window — the room was a sort of kitchen, with a fire, close to which was a vessel of some kind. This showed that somebody must be near, if not within. I went to the other side of the shed, which I found formed a regular poor man's cottage of two rooms : — there was a window on that side too, but I could not see through it, a piece of cloth being hung across it. After a moment's deliberation I determined to go in. I raised the latch, — the door was not locked — I looked round, and was not a little surprised to see, on a table, an elegant cup and saucer, a couple of silver spoons, a knife and silver fork, a handsome crystal goblet, a china bason, and ewer full of fresh water, with plates and other things far above

a common style, as if prepared for the breakfast of a person of distinction : but I was no less surprised on observing, in the corner of the kitchen, two brace of pistols. My surprise at the latter *apparatus* was accompanied with alarm — I suspected that I could not remain with safety in a place to which this combination of tea and warlike equipage was so unsuitable as to the shed under which I stood. I examined the vessel at the fire, and found it contained coffee. I was at a loss what to do. It was clear by the position of the things that I could not stay long without having company.

Being alone, I thought the best part I could take was to secure my retreat. — I turned my back on the coffee and the whole concern. — I made but two steps to the door, which had shut itself with its own weight. I had my hand on the latch, when I was startled by the sound of a deep-fetched sigh. I am not a nervous man, Vernon, and as for my life I care not for it ; but I certainly had a most extraordinary sensation at that moment ; — what name can I give it? It was

not fear — it was horror : — that sigh so like — but no matter : — I looked round, I felt assured that it proceeded from a woman : — I was impelled, I know not by what influence, it was no time for curiosity — no other passion excited — but I was impelled, and I raised the latch of the other chamber-door — that door was locked — no person spoke at the noise I made — I knocked unheeded — I asked who was within — no answer — what could I think ? What was to be done ? I was convinced that some person was in the chamber : it never entered my imagination that the sigh could have proceeded from a man — but if a woman, I may be equally wrong — some girl eloped with her lover — why should I interfere ? “ Farewell damsel,” cried I, “ much good may it do you ! ” — and I was again at the threshold of the hut, when a similar sigh nailed me to the spot. I had opened the door — my eye happened to rest upon the key — to the handle of it hung a second key — a second key ! no doubt that of the inner-room — if so, whoever is within is there by con-

strait. Such, my dear Vernon, were the rapid imaginings of my bewildered brain ; the new sigh and the sight of the keys determined me ; and had Lucifer himself stood before me I would have entered.

I know I am writing with warmth — how can I do otherwise ? I feel almost what I felt at the moment, nor were my feelings then more serious than they are now. I have done, Vernon, what to *you* I will say gives me more pleasure than I ever felt in all my life before : — I will further say to *you*, that for a few hours I was on such good terms with myself, that I believe I felt something passing in my mind amounting, if not to a hope, at least to a wish, that this paltry state was not all. Why do tears come now to my eyes as I write it ? What have I said ? Folly ! I would blot it out, but that I care not if *you* see me as I am. Tell not your Godfreys that my brains are governed by my heart, and not my heart by them ; though they would take the phrase in another sense — well, so be it.

I entered the inner room — “May I come in?” said I. A dead silence prevailed : sufficient light came through the thin cloth over the window to show me a handsome couch on which lay a female figure in a morning dress, motionless, but that I heard her breathe, and found that she was fast asleep. I was convinced that all was not right ; — it was clear that there was no intended mystery ; whatever was going forward was boldly done ; but to me the appearances were sufficiently mysterious to justify some unusual interference. I endeavoured to wake the person by speaking to her — I begged her to answer me ; — this not availing me, I made no ceremony of tearing away the curtain from the window. — Conceive my surprise, my dear Vernon, when I beheld the beautiful features of Saville’s daughter, and that elegant form I once described to you stretched at full length on the couch in a state of stupefaction, for it was no natural sleep ! You may, perhaps, imagine my surprise by your own at the moment of reading this, — but not my agitation. —

I have not to complain in general of the want of presence of mind, but so great was my astonishment, and so affected were my nerves at the sight of this lovely creature in the situation she lay, that my senses for a moment were off their poise — they were almost lost; for a minute they served me but to clasp my hands, and utter a useless ejaculation.

Recovering myself, I could not doubt that there was some villany a-foot: — this was no elopement; constraint was evident, and by the basest means. How shall I save her? was my first thought. There was no time to bring assistance, and she had no power to move; I determined to take her in my arms, and hasten with her to my carriage. The preparations in the cottage, however, and the key in the door convinced me, that such an attempt was scarcely practicable before the return of the persons concerned in the horrid business; the first thing I did therefore was to examine and secure the arms; the pistols were loaded and primed: — a dreadful pause ensued. — If I stand, though armed, I was likely

to be overpowered by numbers. I now tried to rouse the innocent victim of treachery. I did what for my life I would not have done had she been sensible ; I shook her roughly by the arm ; I opened her delicate fingers, and beat the rosy palms of her hands — in vain, in vain. Another deep-fetched sigh was all that my efforts produced. I would have given the world to see her open her eyes. To tell you my feelings, Vernon, I must be inspired with some new language capable of conveying intelligence of what was never felt before. To stay was probably to die : that were nothing, could it save her ; it would be the same if overtaken with her in my arms, but there was a slight chance that I might be beyond pursuit ; I resolved upon it. Putting the pistols into my pockets in the best manner I could, I returned to the couch. She sighed again as I raised and took her up. Rendered bold by so lovely a freight, whom would I not have fought ? whom not conquered ?

I had scarcely preceeded ten paces from the door, when a rustling noise on

the other side of the cottage made me turn to look; in a moment a woman came from behind, who seeing me, gave a scream and ran away as fast as she could. What was now to be done? Nothing was more certain than that I should be overtaken. There was but one thing left for me, and that was to give alarm in time if possible, and the only hope I had of doing this was by firing one or two of the pistols, on hearing which, Aaron would undoubtedly come in search of me with my own. I accordingly managed to draw out one of them, and, letting it off, I threw it among the bushes. The report had such an effect on Miss Saville that she opened her eyes, but instantly closed them again. This symptom of her coming to herself re-animated me, and lightened even the little weight I felt before.

I proceeded, but every step upon the alert, and not without cause. Still, whether owing to a dependence on the woman whom I had seen, or on a calculation of the time allowed for the evaporation of the fumes of the stupefying drug which

had been given to their prey, I had advanced nearly half of the way before the villains came up with me. The noise they made as they ran, gave me sufficient warning to summon up all the coolness the occasion required. I quickly placed the object of pursuit on the grass at the foot of a tree, and returned to face the pursuers. There were three men, two of them seemingly without arms, theirs, I imagined, being in my possession. These, as I advanced, skulked behind trees; the third, showing his weapons, came on boldly. When near enough to take an aim, I called to him in French to stop; his answer was a shot, which I immediately returned, and had the satisfaction to see him fall; at the same instant I heard Aaron's voice halloing; it was also heard by the villains. Of the two who had skulked I saw no more: he that fell must have been but slightly wounded, for he was up in an instant, and proved himself swift of foot. I began to pursue in my turn, and fired again at the rascal, but he was out of my reach. Aaron, now in sight, called to me to

stop, for that he saw men among the trees.

Having gained so much, though eager to take the rogues, I was unwilling to lose my advantage by falling into an ambuscade ; and Aaron had come alone, on hearing the report of the pistol I first fired when I saw the woman. I therefore hastened to complete the removal of my charge, whose deliverance I now flattered myself was effected. As I approached the spot where she lay, my emotion was a truly delightful one ; — my mind was freed from its attention to the means of safety, and left my heart at liberty to enjoy the reflection of having rescued a fellow-creature, and more particularly a being so valued, so loved by a father, and relatives now waiting with impatience to embrace her. She lay precisely as I had placed her, and was still so much under the influence of the narcotic ingredient which she had evidently been made to swallow, that I again took her up in my arms motionless. I briefly made Aaron acquainted with the circumstances that had taken place, and con-

tinuing both on the alert, we arrived without further molestation at the entrance of the by-road, where my chariot, put to rights by the assistance of some passengers, was waiting for me.

Disembarrassed of my-agitation, and cooling in my enthusiasm, I began to feel myself in an awkward position. — Saville's daughter in my arms; Saville's daughter entering a town in my carriage, sleeping upon my bosom, as would probably be the case, — it required a more immaculate character than mine to defy the *flabra* of the Vortex on the other side of the channel. What could I do? I was never more inclined in all my life to attend to the minutiae of delicacy. — Put her into the chariot with Aaron and send her home? That would be profanation. Well!

“ Since Chance would have it so, why Chance did crown
me
Without my stir.”

I took her into the carriage, and I laid her head upon my bosom. Were there such things as angels, Vernon, they might have probed it, and found it then pure as

their's are said to be. Some pangs it felt, indeed. — Oh ! not for her — but let that pass. *She* caused no pang, nor needed she to blush so deep, on finding her cheek on that bosom.

Poissy was nearer than St. Germain, but the latter was in the road to Paris, where I presumed Saville still was. I ordered the postillion to turn and drive to St. Germain. Aaron rode on the box with my pistols loaded. I had the others, of which one remained charged : — but there was no occasion for apprehension : — the day was advanced, and there were more travellers on the road ; besides I was sure that the villains would lose no time in providing for their own safety. Knowing the activity of the French police, their escape appeared to me improbable, and I was so much struck with the face and figure of the principal person that I was sure I could identify him. He was a middle-sized man, slim, yet remarkably broad across the shoulders ; he had very dark brows, and whiskers bushy and wide ; the whole turn of the countenance was ferocious : — I could not mistake him,

and I resolved to give information of him when I arrived at St. Germain.

Meanwhile I ordered my postillion to proceed gently. The indication in the wood of my companion's being about to come to herself, was repeated soon after the carriage was in motion ; she sighed and opened her eyes, but did not recognize me ; she shut them without being aware of her situation. After a few minutes she said, though without opening her eyes, " I am sick." I felt for her, but I was now afraid to speak lest my voice should shock her — yet I thought it necessary, and I begged her to be composed ; she took no farther notice of this than to repeat, " I am sick." I again said, " Pray be composed." She continued quiet for about ten minutes. Her head had dropped a little back upon my arm : — her cheek still rested on my bosom. In this position she again opened her eyes ; they were heavy, but fixed upon my face with such an inquiring look that no brilliancy could have exceeded it in intelligence ; they spoke what her tongue soon uttered. " Good God ! where am I ?"

— “Going to Mr. Saville,” said I. With that answer I perceived her recollection of me returned ; her face, pale with sickness, the effect of the drug she had taken, became at once deeply crimsoned all over, and her very neck received a tinge of her blush. This I could have borne, but it was followed by a flood of tears which distressed me beyond measure. — Now sensible of her position, and yet too weak to disengage herself from it, I easily conceive what she must have suffered. She continued motionless, her eyes shut, but breathing freely ; I now thought her sufficiently revived to understand me, and I accordingly addressed her, first saying that I believed that, though languid, she was in a state of recollection, which allowed of her attention. I then intreated her to be composed, and to listen to me with indulgence for a few minutes : a sudden shudder of her whole frame convinced me that a momentary suspicion of me arose in her mind ; I as instantly forgave her — awaking as she did on my breast, it was but too natural a thought — but I

hastened to remove it, briefly recounting what had passed ; and I concluded with assuring her that the postillion who had brought me from the inn at St. Germain, where I slept the night before, was now taking us to the same inn, where she would be in less than half an hour, with persons about her ready to render her every service, and that in a few hours after she might be in her father's arms. When I stopped speaking, she made an effort to raise her head, her eyes still shut ; she put out her hand as if in search of mine ; it did not search long, but I was little aware of the excess of her emotion ;—she pressed it, carried it to her lips, and bathed it with a shower of tears. You must imagine, for I cannot express, my feelings ; but if you are silly enough, Vernon, to mix with them any thing of your ideas of love, I shall hate you, or pity you.

She now recovered strength enough to endeavour to take her handkerchief out of her pocket. — Upon her moving I discovered that the part of her dress which had touched my coat was stained

red : — she too perceived it, and eagerly exclaimed, “ I hope you are not hurt ; — what is the meaning of this blood ? ” I begged her not to be alarmed, for that I could not account for it. I soon found however, that the cloth of my coat on the side next to her was drenched with blood, and some of the cloth torn away : — I clearly saw that it proceeded from a slight wound of which I had not been sensible, and that the dark colour of my coat had prevented my perceiving it sooner. The knowledge of it seemed to quicken her recovery : forgetting her own misfortune, she was all anxiety about this wound, and conjured me to hasten the boy that it might be immediately examined. I have not often felt the sweetness arising from being the real object of anxiety — yes, sweetness ! and with the concurrent circumstances of that I allude to, it was inexpressibly sweet. — At her desire I ordered the boy to drive fast, and we were soon at St. Germain.

Before we arrived, Miss Saville was sufficiently recovered to converse freely,

but she could no way account for the event which had taken place, either in respect to the planner of it, or the means by which it had been effected. — She remembered no person resembling the man I described, and she had no recollection of taking any thing that could produce such a sleep.

On entering the town she renewed the expression of her anxiety that I would immediately consult a surgeon, which I promised to do, on condition that she would permit him to advise her also as to what she ought to do in order to counteract the poison which she must have taken. — On this she thought of her father, declaring that she could not delay a moment relieving him from the state of suffering he must be in. I said that refreshment was absolutely necessary for her, and suggesting the immediate dispatching of an express to Mr. Saville with an assurance of following speedily, she agreed to see the doctor. Having put her into the hands of the hostess of a good inn at St. Germain, I obeyed her repeated injunction of having the wound examined.

The rascal had like to have shot me ; an inch or two more to the right would have gathered me to my fathers ; — half a quarter of an inch more to the left and the bullet would not have hit me at all. The Fates had ordered the matter well for me : — the ball had merely grazed the flesh and broken two or three little blood-vessels on my side, which had given out just blood enough to moisten a small part of my clothes. — It appeared to have stopped of itself, and required little more than washing. — The doctor was lenient to his other patient : — he told her to expect to be languid for a day or two, and prescribed for her only coffee and exercise. During my short absence she had written a letter to Mr. Saville, which was immediately forwarded by an express, and the next thing to be settled was her conveyance to Paris : — my carriage and my servant were easily offered, but I did not find it so easy to offer the company of the master ; and my conscious unworthiness, or, if you like, my worthy conscience was debating with itself delicate points, when this girl,

proving herself superior to all false delicacy, fixed my wavering sentimentality, by asking me in a direct manner to accompany her. I will give you her words: I can substitute no account to do them justice. After seeing the doctor, she had retired with the hostess to adjust her dress and take some coffee. —

I took that time to lodge an information at the *Bureau de Police*, where I saw the *Commissaire* himself. He was very polite, and saying that an immediate pursuit should be made, offered to accompany me himself to examine the spot. — He thought it necessary, and that I should lodge the pistols I had taken, at his office. I could not but acknowledge the propriety of this, but it seemed to interfere with the expedition of Miss Saville's return to Paris. — On reflection, however, I found that what the officer proposed might be done in an hour or little more. Informing her of this unexpected, or rather unthought-of delay, I civilly offered her my chariot, expressing a regret to be obliged to part with her without seeing her safely lodged at

her hotel in Paris, as her eagerness to be again with her father naturally superseded all other considerations.

“Far from it, Sir,” said she; “perhaps it would have been so, were my mind not relieved respecting his feelings, by the express which, by this time or nearly, will have reached him, and removed his apprehensions. There is another consideration now of the greatest weight with me, and if my request does not too much interfere with any plans you may have, I ask it as an additional favour that you will yourself take me to my father.”

It would be affectation in me to say that I did not penetrate her meaning, and it would be unworthy of the candour with which I speak my mind to you if I pretended to degrade the service I had rendered her and Mr. Saville. I had already perused a good deal of her mind, — enough to know that it could not be easy without expressing its gratitude; the tears that had bathed my hand, the voluntary pressure, and the kiss of it, which no other passion of the breast could have wrung from

her, were incontrovertible proofs. An excuse from me would have sent her to finish her journey painfully. Thanks I wanted not : I had already determined to fly them. — I did not conceive myself entitled, by what I had done, to force the company of an infected, avoided wretch upon the Savilles ; and had I been mean enough to think so, I had no desire to do it ; — but neither had I any right to keep this young lady's mind under a heavy load, to gratify my disdain of acknowledgments ; I therefore resolved to have it all over at once, to take Saville his daughter, receive his thanks, shake hands with him, and set off immediately for England. In conformity to this resolution, I assured her that I should have great satisfaction in complying with her request ; — I purposely avoided the fashionable jargon of “ obeying her commands ; ” — I told her the time I had computed as necessary for the business I was going upon, and saying that I would order every thing to be ready to start as soon as I returned, I left her.

What I have to tell you of my expedition with the *Commissaire de Police* will not add much to my letter. Taking a sufficient force with us, we proceeded to the little road, and on to the cottage. We found but the vestiges of it, and those consisted chiefly of ashes : — it was burnt to the ground. We found the pistol which I had discharged at a few paces from the building : — nothing remained by which the villains could be traced : — the pistols were common old French-made pistols. The *Commissaire* proposed going on to Poissy, but, agreeing with me that the men were not likely to be found there, and that the apprehending of them would take time, he acknowledged the propriety of my returning to Miss Saville, took my address, and went on himself.

At St. Germain I found the carriage at the door, and, handing Miss Saville in, placed myself by her. Very different were my sensations during the remainder of my day's journey to those of the former part of it. Roused by circumstances, I had been playing a kind of

preternatural part ; I had, in fact, as I told you in the beginning of my letter, been transformed, by the irresistible humour of the Fates, into a hero of Romance, and compelled to fulfil my high destinies : but the Romance was over : — I was no longer an Oroondates ; — I was myself again, — the sophisticated Darrell, hated and hated by the world ; a scorner of the male part of it ; a contemner of females ; a being slandered unjustly, yet not sufficiently condemned ; heedless of calumny, shattered by the lightning of thought ; now weary of life, now laughing at its tricks ; as unfit for gallantry as for saying mass ; a lauder of the grave, a haunter of theatres ; amused with folly, but preferring sleep to thought, and death to sleep. — Such is the man who was now seated beside the most beautiful woman in Europe. As to her beauty, it would not have disturbed me ; but it happened that she magnetized me with a feeling which I hardly remember to have had for any of her sex before, a feeling of respect. The motive which had swayed her to request

my company, the confidence she evinced in herself, that which she reposed in me, the complete absence of all the little arts which are practised by weak females to allure attention, and in no small degree the consideration of my having been the instrument of her preservation, all conspired to raise her for the time to the rank of a divinity in my estimation. I could have worshipped her in form, but I did not find it easy to talk familiarly to her. She spoke of her father with affectionate anxiety, of the pleasure she expected in meeting her relations, of Italy, of Switzerland, and of England, but without the slightest allusion to Grove Park. She did all she could to support a conversation ; but, owing to the little part I took in it, it was evidently constrained, and, in spite of all the charms I have celebrated in this epistle, I was more than once sensible that I should have been more at my ease at my hotel. — The fact is, that my attention was at times broken by reflections upon her and upon myself which would obtrude themselves : — I compared my

mind to hers, and wondered at the difference. — It once crossed me, but only once, and the thought rested not a minute on my brain, that had I been like her, that had I been worthy — the imagining went no further : — it dropped into a secret silent ejaculation of pity. — Poor Flower ! destined to be cropped by the hand of some barbarian, to deck for a while the bosom of some selfish brute, to fade, to die, to —. What kind of a system is this, where virtue is proved by misery, and beauty is the destined food of worms ? Oh ! Vernon ! the death of a beautiful woman is, of all horrors the —. But what has this to do with Miss Saville ? — My thoughts run strangely aside at times : — *She* is not dying, she is not likely to die. — I would say she ought to marry, if a man were to be found worthy of her. — I wish you were worthy of her, Vernon, but you are not, — don't think of her ; I never will consent ; — remember, though I should never see her again, I am now her champion for life — no Vortex for HER ! Think you that she has

enflamed *me*, and that I am preparing springes for her? Dépend upon it, *she* will never think in that way of me; and, what is equally true, never will *I* think in that way of her: — no, were there no other objection, I have that within me that can never be overcome; — I can have no resting place; and shall I seek it by contaminating the purest of bosoms? Never, never.

My reflections make me digress — I have little to add to the adventures of the day, yet did the conclusion prove even more alarming than the outset. It was still broad day-light when we drove into the court of the hotel, in which the Savilles have apartments. Miss Saville's maid and the other servants were ready to receive her: they expected her, but their countenances presaged woe. As I handed her from the chariot, she said, "you will come up with me." "Sir," said the servant in a whisper, "my master is dangerously ill — he is not expected to live." She had flown up the stairs, or I would have detained her — I endeavoured to overtake her — I should as soon

have out-stripped Atalanta. Before I reached the saloon, I lost sight of her, nor have I seen her since.

After remaining alone some time, I went in search of a servant, and found one in the anti-chamber. Learning that a physician was with Mr. Saville, I requested to see him for a minute. He came out to me, and I heard from him that the disappearance of his daughter had agitated Mr. Saville in such a manner as to produce a fever, attended with delirium, of which the issue was very uncertain. I asked for Miss Saville: — he said that she was at her father's bedside on her knees, and totally absorbed in her misfortune. I have known what it is to feel acutely: — my feeling at that moment was something like the — yes, like ——. My part was acted — I had no more to do — I was extremely shocked, but I had no more to do, and I drove to my old quarters, where I now am.

I sent Aaron three times last night to Mr. Saville's hotel, but so late as twelve o'clock his intelligence afforded no hope, and I spent a sleepless night, for what

between the daughter and the father I could not reduce the current of my blood to its periodical torpor. About eight this morning I again dispatched Aaron for intelligence, and he brought word that Mr. Saville was come to himself. At ten I went myself, and, asking for Miss Saville, I was informed that she was just gone to bed, having been up all night. — I then requested to see the physician who, I was told, had just gone in. From him I had the pleasure of hearing that the disorder had taken a favourable turn, that the delirium had ceased, that he had recognised his daughter, and that from the abatement of the fever there was no doubt of his doing well. It is astonishing what an effect this intelligence had upon me. My spirits had been extremely depressed by the termination of the events of yesterday, and it gave them a fillip, which acted upon me not unlike good Burgundy, when I was in the habit of wine-bibbing. It inspired me with a degree of gaiety which I returned with here, and began,

as the first pages of my letter testify, to vent upon you.

I have done nothing the whole of this day but write to you, which you may see from the volume I send. It is late, and I feel inclined to go to bed and sleep like Endymion ; yet I will not close my letter without thanking you for yours from Herefordshire. I think I see Lady Bab leaping the five-barred gate, and giving Tim Dawson the go-by cheer ; then all the dogs among mother Paine's pigs. What a delight is that taken by sportsmen ! But there is no disputing taste, though for my part I think I should prefer felling an ox with a hammer, to running a hare out of its life. Why not ? Is not death the system of all nature ? Bravo, Lady Bab ! Bravo my Lord ! Sport away ; sporting is your vocation — sporting is only butchering. — I am glad your brother has so amiable a wife, but I think she might employ her time better than in reading registers of human butchery, which is infinitely the worst species of it. It was no fault of the Duke of Marlborough's, that so many

throats were cut at Blenheim, and elsewhere : no, I do not say that, but I say butchery runs in the blood of our gentle race in a triplicate ratio : the first and most innocent division appropriates the generic term, and is plain butchery for the gratification of the glutton ; the second species is denominated game, the pleasure of which does not consist in the supply of food, but solely in the dexterity of frightening, killing, or catching poor little animals ; the third species, the most unaccountable of the three, is called glory, and the pleasure of that consists in wading unappalled through rivers of human blood. I think if her ladyship cannot confine herself to novels and plays, as she ought to do, she had better take to sermons to keep up her fund of patience, a virtue so requisite for one in her situation.

I rejoice that your good genius sped you from Hampshire with Mr. Godfrey ; if he had not, depend upon it your evil genius would have got you into a scrape. I am no *Preux* ; I hardly know Mrs. Godfrey's person, and Godfrey more from

your account than personal knowledge — I own however that I have a new inducement to wish them well. The farce at Hants Cottage is exquisite. — I am no conjurer if Squire Rufus is not a sly sinner without your aid. — Did you ever know a professor of purity that was not a hypocrite? I should not be surprised to find Mrs. Martha's frown and petticoat-lending more owing to jealousy than to pudency. His epistle is delicious — keep him up I conjure you. But how you can possibly conceive that Mrs. Godfrey casts a thought away upon such a creature is to me astonishing. — The repeated refusals of admission in the absence of her husband, which you have seen under his own hand, have no doubt brought conviction of the injustice you did to her taste, if to nothing else — but depend upon it the case would have been the same with you : — you would not have been admitted — and probably not have understood the matter more than he ; though your mistake would have been different, and would have led

to a different result. Once more let me say, — stop in time.

I have no objection to your going to Bramblebear-Hall; but I would have you be cautious there too.

Lady Bab I find is a blab — but, though she may be mistaken with respect to me, I am less scrupulous myself in thinking a little more freely of the one lady than of the other. I do not think I shall go to Bramblebear's on my return to England; but you shall know what becomes of me when I land at Brighton, which will probably be in the course of a week, if the police will take my pledge that I will return to Paris, if necessary for the conviction of the villains whom the officers are in pursuit of. Meanwhile you may hint to Lady Barbara that, if I find her meddling with my character, I will have a Callipyges statue of her made riding on horseback, for Rufus's paddock; and being nothing but stone, as Miss Kitty Palmer says, there will be no Coventry-law against peeping at her.

Adieu! I hope I shall have good ac-

counts in the morning of Mr. Saville,
and that I shall get away from Paris either
to-morrow or next day.

Ever truly yours,

F. DARRELL.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

Printed by A. and R. Spottiswoods,
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SIR FRANCIS DARRELL.

VOL. II.

**Printed by A. and R. Spottiswoode,
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SIR FRANCIS DARRELL;

OR

THE VORTEX:

A Novel.

By R. C. DALLAS, Esq.

AUTHOR OF PERCIVAL, AUBREY, MORLAND,

&c. &c.

E i rimorsi, e il pentire, e il pianger, nulla
Fia che mi vaglia? ALFIERI.

The gathering number, as it moves along,
Involves a vast involuntary throng;
Who, gently drawn, and struggling less and less,
Roll in her vortex, and her power confess. POPE.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

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1820.



SIR FRANCIS DARRELL;

OR

THE VORTEX.

LETTER XIX.

Augusta to Sir Francis Darrell.

MISS SAVILLE is very grateful for the repeated inquiries of Sir Francis Darrell respecting the progress of her father's disorder. She is truly happy to inform him, that he had so good a night last night, that the physician has permitted him to receive a friend; and she hopes that it will be convenient to Sir Francis to call in the course of the morning.

Miss Saville has not words to express her sense of her obligation to Sir Francis ; but she begs him to believe that her gratitude is unbounded ; and she trusts that her father will be able to say more for her than she is able to say for herself. He expects the pleasure of seeing him, and Miss Saville hopes he will not be disappointed.

Hotel de • •
Sunday morning.

LETTER XX.

Sir Francis Darrell to Miss Saville.

MADAM,

I AM happy to hear that Mr. Saville's illness is likely to terminate so favourably. So far your note has given me much pleasure, but in other respects it greatly distresses me. Spare me, I beseech you, the pain of coming to receive acknowledgments. I am more than repaid the service I rendered you. If you were acquainted with me you would easily believe this. Such a day as Friday last is worth all the rest of my life : — what would I not give to risk it once a week on similar conditions ! I should then feel that life had some value, and believe that it was intended to be enjoyed, not endured. I lived in that day more than I have done for eight years past, and for this I am indebted to you. I have been stating the account between us, and find

that there is a very large balance of gratitude due to you. — How am I to pay it? I am a complete bankrupt in the proper coin for the liquidation of such debts. All I can do is to compound with my generous creditor by paying her the just homage of respect; — in which she will find that absence and distance are implied. Your friends in England will illumine what you may find dark in this sentence.

I sincerely wish you and Mr. Saville more happiness than I believe life affords. — I am to see him in England; meanwhile present my compliments, and allow me thus to take my leave.

I am, Madam,

Your most obedient servant,

F. DARRELL.

LETTER XXI.

Mr. Saville to Mrs. Godfrey.

(Inclosed in the letter he was writing when he received
Monsieur Penevaux's note.)

TRUSTING, my dear Caroline, that no intelligence of the event which has just happened here can reach you before you receive this, I please myself with the hope of your escaping all the misery which you must have suffered had you received the account from any other hand. Not that it could well be exaggerated,—but you would have remained in suspense of the issue, which, I thank God, is such as to enable me to convey to you joy instead of horror.

How shall I tell you the circumstances? — They are frightful, but scarcely more frightful than incredible, or at least inexplicable. I must proceed with order to make you understand what I *can* communicate, which I will do, having now recovered sufficient strength both of body

and mind. Both were rendered incapable for a time by the dreadful, unexpected blow which it pleased Providence to inflict like a stroke of lightning, and to remedy with almost equal celerity.

You will see, my dear Caroline, that I had not power to finish the letter which I only waited the return of Augusta to close. I had begun to be uneasy, before I proceeded as far as I did, and my anxiety was wound up to a most painful degree of suspense, when our carriage returned empty from Monsieur Penevaux's with a note, informing me that she had not been there. I was in a state of distraction, and could hardly make the common enquiries of the servants. Her maid was also missing. They had been set down at the gate of the Tuilleries' garden, and the carriage ordered to go and wait for them at Penevaux's. Hardly in my senses, I drove immediately to his house; — but to what purpose? He had already informed me that he was ignorant of where she was. I now recollect the kindness and anxiety with which he and Madame Penevaux participated my

feelings better than I observed them at the time. — I had lost my child, — my remaining treasure upon earth : some accident had deprived me of her ; — what, I could not divine, but lost she was : — she would never have left me to such torturing suspense had she been alive : — her maid might have partaken her fate, or was at that moment witnessing her death. Conceive, Caroline, conceive my state, for I cannot describe it : — what was to be done ? The Penevauxs were as much at a loss as myself. They could form no conjecture upon the event. — It was now dark.

“ Let us go together,” said Penevaux, “ to the woman with whom she spent a part of the morning.”

“ No, she was gone from her house. — Could she be at Madame D’Arcy’s, the Count De B.’s relation ? It was too late, but let us go, for go somewhere we must.”

“ Compose yourself as much as possible,” said this worthy man, “ nothing serious can have happened ; she is surely there, and unexpectedly detained.” He was mistaken ; my agitation was extreme — he ordered the carriage to the Count

De B.'s.— The Count had heard nothing of her the whole day. Greatly shocked, he proposed consulting an officer of the police. — The very thought of such a step being necessary brought fresh horror to my imagination. Fear had now become passive in my sinking heart; I left the guidance of all to my two friends, and remaining silent, abandoned my mind to despair.

What a poor creature is man when put to the trial! We talk of philosophy and of religion while we are in the calm enjoyment of our daily habits, but of what use are they to hearts bound up in earthly bliss when Providence thinks proper to give us lessons of suffering by shaking it from our grasp? The occasion was indeed one of the most afflicting nature, and I must have been inferior to a brute not to have writhed at the stroke. Affliction belongs to man, and the wisest are not exempt:— but despair, Caroline, is letting go our hold on Providence at once with the gift he chooses to recall. Man may weep, but he should trust; he should preserve his reason in any trial to guide

him in yielding to that will, which directs the events of to-morrow, as well as those of to-day. The despair, to which I gave myself up, little merited the blessing which cured it;—but I am grateful, and in owning myself weak, I hope my thanks are not the less acceptable.

But to proceed in my narrative.—An immediate search was instituted by the police,—the servants underwent a strict examination, and enquiry was made at the house of the *Marchande de Modes*.—The boatmen along the river,—all the *Voituriers* were applied to, and a reward offered for information. All that could be ascertained was that she had staid with Mariana Gaza, the milliner, about an hour, and had chosen to walk across the garden of the Tuilleries for exercise. With this fruitless intelligence was I doomed to pass the night.—So lost was I to all that passed around me, that though Count B. and Penevaux remained with me, I took no notice of them.—With my arms folded I slowly paced the apartment till I lost my recollection, which, thank God! I did not recover, till I felt

Augusta's hand in mine as she knelt by my bedside.

But how shall I tell you the conclusion of this affair? How make you believe the means by which she was recovered and restored to me? Surprising they are, and I will allow you to *say* also incredible; but nevertheless believe them you must, for here are the facts, and the witness, Augusta herself. She has been rescued from villains, and restored to me by a man who, from George's letter, I should rather have suspected of assisting to rob a father of his daughter than of exposing his life to restore her to him; — by Sir Francis Darrell. Yes, Sir Francis Darrell; at whose door I had a few days before coldly left my card and compliments, in consequence of concluding from his character that he was one of those ready destroyers of family-happiness who like vultures are ever sweeping along the atmosphere to pounce upon some unsuspecting prey. Incredibilities have changed places in my mind — If so gallant an interposition by him in favour of a helpless girl was incredible, it is now to me incredible that he should

deserve the character which George tells me he bears in England. My dear Caroline, this is an inconsistency utterly unintelligible. That he is a singular, an unaccountable, being, I allow, and has extraordinary modes of thinking and speaking ; but a man that is ready to sacrifice his life in defending the innocence of a woman cannot be a villain, — must be a man of honour.

To dwell minutely on the particulars of this strange business would require more time than I can devote to it at present, as I am anxious to dispatch my letters to-day ; and as Augusta will detail it to you soon, it will be enough to give you the heads. She alighted at the Tuilleries in consequence of finding her head grow heavy, imagining that the air and the walk would recover her ; Madelena walked by her side. — Instead of being revived, she grew heavier, and as she approached the other gate lost all recollection : — the last thing she remembers was that she took hold of Madelena's arm. At that moment they were surrounded by several men and separated : —

they contrived, both by holding a handkerchief to Madelena's mouth and showing her daggers under their coats, to prevent her making a noise; but she clearly saw them lift her mistress into a carriage, where she was received by a woman, while they hurried herself, almost terrified to death, into another carriage, into which two men went with her. She understood very little of what they said, but they made her comprehend that they would not use her ill if she were quiet and suffered herself to be blind-folded. They drove about Paris for a considerable time, taking short turnings, and appearing at times to go back the way they had come, evidently to prevent her forming any idea of the place they were carrying her to, which was unnecessary as the girl is a perfect stranger:—but this they could not tell. They kept her all night confined and watched in a room poorly furnished, and the next day brought her back in the same manner before it was quite light:—there was no person stirring. — The men took her out of the carriage before they came to the Tuilleries; — she

walked between them blindfold, and when arrived at the gardens she was commanded, on pain of immediate death, not to remove the bandage from her eyes till she heard three distinct claps of the hand. She continued a long time expecting the signal, but it was never given, and it was not till she was accosted by an accidental passenger that she ventured to speak, and take off the fillet that prevented her seeing. She could not make herself understood further than the name of our hotel, whither the man who had spoken to her, pitying her situation, escorted her about seven in the morning. — Of this of course I knew nothing till some days after.

Meanwhile, it seems that her mistress was conveyed in a state of stupefaction a couple of leagues beyond St. Germain, and deposited in a deserted cottage in the wood at some distance from the road. — It was the benign decree of Providence that Sir Francis Darrell's carriage should be upset near a path which led to the spot. Going in search of assistance, he came, I was going to say accidentally, certainly

providentially, to the cottage where my child lay in an unnatural state of sleep. He knew her features, and suspecting some villainy, he resolved on carrying her away, not a creature being near to prevent him : but being perceived by a woman who had charge of the place, he was soon pursued, and had to encounter the villains ; but his man fortunately calling to him, they made off, and the preserver of my child brought her in a few hours back to our hotel. What her feelings were on finding me in my bed, and in a state not to know her, you will easily imagine, nor will I pretend to describe mine on coming to myself. She was on her knees weeping and praying, and her tears and prayers were changed into blessings and thanksgiving. As for me, I nearly lost my senses again for joy ; — but the grand cause of my malady was removed, and I soon recovered sufficiently to quit my room.

But my gratitude was not so tardy even as this speedy recovery : — I was anxious to express it. — I requested Sir Francis to come to me while I was yet

confined. He excused himself, and in a manner very consonant to his behaviour, when he called upon me relative to the business I mentioned to George. He wrote a note to Augusta, assuring her that the balance of gratitude was due from him, and entreating to be spared the receiving of acknowledgments. — It is a curious letter — you will see it — and, like the writer, very paradoxical. I was not content — I sent Count de B. and Mr. Falstaff to him to prevail upon him to come and see me, but he persisted in his resolution, and so much in his own manner as to puzzle Count de B. whether he should think well or ill of him: — their short interview was divided between alternate frowns and smiles, and he was shy and uncommunicative respecting the occurrences which reflected such honour upon him. Falstaff was more accustomed to his character, and knew that he would much sooner have consented to be shot at again than to pay me a visit on this occasion. I determined the moment I could stir out to go to him, and I heard that he was likely to be de-

tained on account of the police. But it seems the Bureau was satisfied with his pledging himself to return to Paris if any discovery should be made in which his testimony might be necessary. When I called at the hotel where he lodged, I was informed that he had left Paris.

I can make nothing of this young man; he is his own master, and will take his own course; but you cannot be surprised, my dear Caroline, that I am interested about him, and would lay my life down to render him worthy of a different reputation. I may venture to say this the more freely, as it is evident that Augusta, with all the beauty, all the charms her fond father thinks her possessed of, has not made the slightest impression on him; and that after rescuing her from villains, after carrying her a mile in his arms, after spending the greater part of a day alone with her, he indifferently turns his back upon her with a cold phrase — “I am glad I was of use to you; there is no merit in me; — I would have done it for any body else.” — But so much the higher does he stand in my

opinion : — the spring of his conduct was instinctive benevolence. — It is manifest that his nature is good. — Lucifer has let loose some of his imps upon him as upon a noble prey more likely than others to have baffled his toils — and who knows but he will baffle them yet? Gracious Heaven! Shall a youth of five-and-twenty be gossiped into perdition? My dearest Caroline, we must consult about this young man; we must all put our heads together, muster our whole stock of wisdom to retrieve his reputation, and fix it on the exalted site where it evidently ought to rest.

To return to the event which has produced these reflections. — We are unable to trace the circumstances to any plausible source. — The first question is, who can have been so mad and so base as to seize upon the person of your cousin in the manner I have described? The natural answer is, it must be the act of some man in love. — But who? At Florence several young men of family and fortune had declared themselves her lovers. — There was but one among these whom I could possibly

suspect : the others were gentle and resigned. Olivastro, whom I have already mentioned to George, was of a violent nature ; but circumstances convince me that it cannot be him. — In the first place, he is at Vienna ; in the next, I have received a letter from him, written *there*, which was only delivered the day after Augusta was restored to me ; and in that letter he declares his intention, — as soon as he can consistently with the objects which carried him to Vienna, — of taking a journey to England, and expresses his hope of being permitted to renew his addresses. The circumstance of the letter being evidently written at Vienna at the very time of the horrible transaction in Paris, coupled with its moderate tone, and the reference to a future time and another country, completely remove the suspicion I should otherwise have promptly attached to him.

Olivastro being thus out of the question, to whom shall I impute the action ? Can I possibly think of that lively enthusiastic young man whom I told you we met at Geneva ? He is, it must be owned,

romantic in the extreme ; and his sudden declaration proves him unceremonious. — He has abundant means too : but then the banker's character of him. — I am totally at a loss ; — yet this gentleman, Mr. Dartford, is the person on whom my apprehension is most inclined to rest.

Now, as to the means used. — Augusta can in no way account for her sleep ; — she took nothing at the house where she went to make purchases ; — she was offered refreshment by the person whom she went to see, but had not accepted it ; and indeed the only thing like eatables were produced by herself, being a box of *bonbons* which she had bought at a confectioner's in her way, for the children. She did not take any thing after leaving that house. Whatever the drug was, it could not have been administered at our hotel ; — we had breakfasted together ; — our coffee was poured out of the same pot : the bread, — the butter, were indifferently taken from the same plates. The plot must have been laid with the greatest art, and appears inscrutable.

Every thing has been done to discover the perpetrators, but fruitlessly, and as the police magistrates will not detain me against my inclination, I have resolved, being sufficiently recovered, to take our departure on Monday next : — this is Friday.

Woodlee being in Hampshire, the most convenient place for us to disembark will be Southampton. — It is but a few hours' ride ; and as we have been detained at Paris so much longer than we expected, perhaps your husband will be returned, and we may meet you both there. — George mentioned Southampton. — Of course our route will be to Rouen, where we shall rest a day, and then proceed to Havre de Grace, where I am informed the Southampton packets come regularly twice a week. In the course of the next, then, you may expect us. Augusta is quite well, and in travelling trim. Her poor little maid seems hardly recovered of her fright : — no wonder, you will say, after such an agitation as her nerves underwent. She was so overjoyed at the news brought by

an express that her mistress was found, and on her way home, that she fainted.

Before I close my letter I will go to Monsieur Penevaux's; — I owe him a call, and it is not impossible that the post may bring me a letter while there from George or from you, if he is still at Manor House.

* * * * *

What a life is this! What shall I say? — How tell you what I have seen? Heaven grant it may be false! — Horrible! — but you must have seen it yourself. — It is reported that Sir Francis Darrell has been way-laid and murdered. — I saw the report in an English newspaper which I accidentally took up at Penevaux's. — The shock I received on reading the paragraph is not to be described. — Penevaux does not believe it: — he says it must have been known in Paris sooner than in London. I pray to Heaven he may be right, but it is impossible to shake off my dreadful apprehension till I hear something certain on the subject.

We shall certainly proceed, as I said, on Monday, for I am more than ever anxious to be at our journey's end, and to embrace you and your little Caroline. Augusta is equally anxious. — Next week then we shall be in your arms.

Your truly affectionate

GILBERT SAVILLE.

LETTER XXII.

Augusta to Angelica.

Woodlee.

How diversified is life, my dear Angelica ! How strewn with flowers ! How does happiness preponderate over misery ! We find enough of the latter on earth to show that it is not our permanent station, but how graciously has the Almighty every where lavished the seeds of joy for those who choose to nurture them ! Have not our years, my sister, run on in a current of happiness ? Has not almost everything on which our minds have been fixed, flowed smoothly and sweetly along ? A painful recollection of my dear mother's state of health and early removal from me, the loss of your brothers and the consequent grief of your father and mother, are the dark and agitated pas-

sages of our lives ; for the few vexations arising from our intercourse with the world, are not worth mentioning. Time softened what was sorrowful ; and every day, on the other hand, afforded us new gratifications and joys. Our friendship, our family union, the daily acquisition of knowledge, the pleasures presented by Nature and by the works of Art ; the delight of reading, the pleasant hours of agreeable society, our music, the use of our means among those who overpaid us with smiles and blessings, and other sources of happiness, have been granted to *us* ; and I think that most of these are placed within the reach of a very great part of the world :—why not bestowed on all, it is not for us to determine ; but even among the generality, springs of happiness are numerous : health, content, industry, family-love, hope, are after all, the greatest earthly comforts, and are seen to lead less seldom to dissatisfaction than the untoward musings of proudly educated intellect. I suspect that where there is a want of happiness, there is a neglect in cultivating it ; — the seeds are

scattered in our way ; but we must plant, and transplant, and house, and refresh, and renew ; we must find this as well as every thing else by seeking : — it is clearly the condition of our fallen state, and they hardly deserve compassion who will not take the pains to be happy.

I make these remarks, my dear Angelica, from reflecting on the subjects on which I have to write in this letter. I have to tell you a miserable tale of myself, and to talk to you of villany, and escapes, and sufferings ; — but what are they ? — Transient alarm, terror, and pain ; they came and passed ; a few days terminated them — and new happiness is sown around me — I am at Woodlee — and of Woodlee I must speak before I can think on any other subject, that is, of the dear inhabitants of Woodlee. — Love, love, Angelica, love is the embellisher of place, love is the gilder of life. — It made Signa a paradise, so does it Woodlee — Banish that, and all is gloom ; palaces and gardens, the productions of nature, the inventions of art, whatever science can dignify, or imagination fancy, all, all are

insipid. We approve, we praise, but we do not enjoy — where that is, all is joy, all is animated; a cottage, a shed, a heath, the clumsy imitations of the unskilled, — all produce the paradise which is in the mind. It is indeed the grand blessing of life, and we are assured by the highest of authorities, that it is the grand blessing of superior beings. — To love and to be loved seems so natural a delight to the soul, that it cannot but be a divine inspiration. I am here experiencing the truth of what I am asserting. I have met with hearts like your own, with virtues such as I am accustomed to in the dear friends of my infancy.

Caroline Godfrey is a very lovely and amiable woman. She is young and possessed of a very warm heart. Her husband, my cousin George, in compliance with whose entreaties my father has returned to England, is worthy of her; he is sensible, agreeable, affectionate, and very highly respected for his public talents and integrity. The warmth of affection, the openness of heart, with which they both received me, and which they

continue to bestow upon me, are sources of new happiness which it will delight my Angelica to hear of, and which I trust she will one day witness and participate. They have a little daughter about two years old, a very engaging creature, whom I take great pleasure in fondling. George was extremely affected on meeting my father after an absence of fifteen years. He said he found very little alteration in him.— That I can imagine; but he persuades himself that he recollects me too, though I was but four years old, and he, I think, not fifteen when we were separated. I have no doubt it is my mother whom he recollects in me, for he says I am very like her, and adds, “I love you the more for it.”

And now that I have made you a little acquainted with my Godfreys, go back with me, my dear Angelica, and learn one of the most extraordinary adventures, not only that I have ever met with myself, but ever heard of. In my last from Paris, I gave you some account of my time, and also of the unexpected meeting

with, and strange behaviour of Sir Francis Darrell, on which I remarked with the usual frankness of my pen, when writing to you. I little foresaw at the time, how soon I was to be indebted to him for rescuing me from the hands of villains, and how my sentiments would vary, or be perplexed, between the nature of his actions, such as I had known, and the peculiarity of his behaviour and language.

I hardly know how to relate the unaccountable event of my being carried away, but so it was. My father had been preparing to leave Paris, every thing was ready, and we were to set out in a couple of days. I went out, intending to call on Madame Penevaux, and in the way to see Mariana Gaza, whom I mentioned meeting in Paris, and of whom I purposed making some purchases. I took Madelena with me, and spent upwards of an hour with Mariana and her children; but partook of no refreshment at her house, so that no means could have been practised there to affect my senses; yet I had scarcely left her when I began to feel

myself giddy and sleepy. — Madelena proposed my alighting, and walking through the garden of the Tuilleries, to refresh myself with the air. I did so, but before I crossed the garden I lost all recollection, and did not recover it till the next morning, when I found myself in Sir Francis Darrell's chariot, with my head reclining on his arm. At first, I thought that I was dreaming; but when he spoke, and begged me to hear him with *indulgence*, I felt an inexpressible degree of horror, my blood rushed into my face, and I shuddered all over. I was fortunately not sufficiently recovered to speak as I wished at the moment:— I could never have forgiven myself, had I unthinkingly insulted him with the expression of a suspicion he so little merited. He made use of the occasion to explain the circumstances, and I heard with wonder that he had found me at a cottage, in a stupified state, and rescued me from villains, in a wood, between St. Germain and Poissy. He at the same time assured me that he had ordered his carriage to an inn, which he had left but an hour

before, and that I might very soon after be in Paris with my father. — Such was the effect of this statement, which he made so naturally, and in such a mild and sympathising tone of voice, that I could have pressed him to my heart without a blush : — nor did I altogether resist the grateful emotion ; — my eyes still closed, I put out my hand to him, and pressing his to my lips, bathed it with tears. Angelica would have done the same — it was no sacrifice to Sir Francis Darrell, it was a tribute to the virtue he had displayed in my favour, a tribute to the prompter of that virtue, — to God ! who saw the pure generosity of his heart, and the excessive gratitude of mine.

If that feeling could have led, as is sometimes supposed, to another of which he might be decidedly the sole object, — to that passion of love which would prompt a woman to devote her heart to a sacred attachment, sanctioned by religion, and durable as life, his behaviour was not at all adapted to promote it. While I was the object of his compassion, nothing could be more soothing, more attentive,

more truly engaging:—courage, softness, and benevolence marked his conduct: — but I was no sooner relieved, and placed in the hands of an inn-keeper's wife, at St. Germain, than he became anxious to get rid of me. Advising some previous refreshment, he was in a hurry to send me off in his carriage, with his man to attend me ; although at his own suggestion I had dispatched an express to relieve my father's mind ; and I was obliged, prompted by my desire of my father's seeing and thanking him, to ask the favour of his accompanying me to our hotel in Paris.

Very different I own were my feelings towards him. His action, in itself so noble, was doubly acknowledged by my heart, in its having been done, however accidentally, — for me. He had risked his life, he was wounded, though slightly, he had thought only of attending to me till I no longer needed his attention. Could I do otherwise than wish to present him to my father, who might thank him better than I could ? Yet Angelica, this was not my only mo-

tive — I had an irresistible inclination to converse with him, and to form some judgment of my own respecting a man whose character was so stained, and whose actions had, notwithstanding, rendered him an object of such interest to my father and to myself. Alas! I was again disappointed, though I did every thing I could to draw forth his sentiments by expressing my own. He did not indeed so bend his brows, that the effect might be mistaken for a frown, such as I had before been struck with ; on the contrary, there was an appearance of deference in his countenance, and in his whole manner, that was evidently the result of a determination not to assume upon the service he had done me : but his conversation, during an hour and a half that I was on the road with him, was constrained ; — his heart was shut ; he listened, and he thought much more than he spoke. He rarely looked at me ; his eyes at times seemed to have no outward object ; but, far from being vacant, they appeared indeed over-charged by the reflection of the mind. He said that he

was not astonished at the villainy he had defeated — but rather that it did not happen more frequently, for of all mankind the greatest savages were to be found among nations pretending to civilization: but he was much surprised at my not being able to trace it to the perpetrator; he said that it must be some man who had, or pretended to have, a desperate passion for me, and that suspicion would naturally fall upon him who had betrayed the greatest violence of temper. Nothing could be more just, and I did at the time suspect a person whom I have since had reason to think I injured by so doing: I was therefore right, indeed I was right in every sense, in not betraying my opinion, and which he was aware I could not give without some degree of indelicacy. — I saw this by his immediately dropping the subject.

To you, Angelica, I will confess that my suspicion can rest on no other than Olivastro, and in spite of the circumstances I allude to, which seem to prove it impossible to be him, I still must doubt that he is the man. His mad

declaration that he would never give up the hope of gaining my hand ; — his violent expressions on my refusing to hear him on that subject ; — the difficulty with which his family prevailed upon him to attend to his interest with the Grand Duke, — all justify me in the doubt at least. — On the other hand, the proof of his being at Vienna, by a letter from him in his own hand-writing to my father, received about the time of this event, the manner in which he writes of taking a journey to this country, and the mildness with which he entreats to be received as a friend, are circumstances that counterbalance the consideration of his temper, and require some hesitation in pronouncing our opinion.

Having fallen into this part of the story sooner than I meant, I will, before I quit it, say, that when thinking of Olivastro, I could not help including in my doubt the husband of Mariana Gaza, accompanied with a slight suspicion of herself ; — but her anxiety for me and for poor Madelena, (who not being set asleep, spent the night much

worse than I did, in a remote part of Paris, where she was taken blindfold and completely silenced, and where she was released next morning,) removed my doubts as to the Gazas. — It was clear too, as I have observed, that it was not with them that I had taken the stuff which had set me asleep. It is most extraordinary that I have not even now the slightest clue to guide me in the discovery either of the time or place of its being given, or of the nature of it, though a French physician at St. Germain imagines it to have been opium, of which a dose had been calculated to continue its efficacy a certain time,—probably about four-and-twenty hours,—my waking earlier being caused by the circumstances of removing me, the firing of pistols, and the additional motion of the carriage. Whatever it was, the affair remains inexplicable, and not even the activity of the French police has been able to trace the persons concerned in the outrage.

But to return to Sir Francis,—and you cannot but believe me greatly interested

about him : — he did not dwell a moment on the opinion he had expressed, but hastily turned the conversation, as if conscious that he had said what I ought not to reply to. We were passing Marli.

“ That,” said he, pointing to a small hill to the right, “ was the site of a pavilion which once belonged to beauty, that commenced its career in the vice of pleasure, and terminated life by an impulse of idiotic avarice : — she lost her pavilion by the death of her royal lover, and her head by a guillotine, under the steel of which she thrust it in looking for some paltry diamonds.”

I asked who it was.

“ A woman,” replied he, “ of whose history you ought to know nothing ; — her name was Dubarré ; — the very sound of it is contamination to an innocent mind. — They say she died disgracefully struggling with her executioners ; — yet it is known that women can die as firmly as men.”

“ No wonder,” said I, “ that the unfortunate woman you mention should be afraid to die ; death must always be an

awful change, but to the wicked it must be dreadful. — How differently did the Queen suffer ! the scaffold was ennobled by her virtues and the greatness of her soul.”

“ Virtue is not always necessary to the contempt of death,” said he ; — “ life is a greater suffering to some ; death is repose : — but I do not wish you to think as I do ; — you have no doubt religious principles, and God forbid that I should disturb them. — Make the most of them — they have been very useful to many. — There is a victim in our history, to whose beauty I confess they seem to add a supernatural charm : — she too was a Queen, an ephemeral one, but far worthier of the sceptre than the bigoted Catholic, who devoted her lovely neck to the block. I never think of that passage of our annals without a kind of pious feeling myself ; — it was a mixture of earthly and celestial love that intoxicates the imagination : — and to think too that it was a most beautiful and sensible girl of seventeen, that met the blow with smiles ! ”

“ You mean Lady Jane Grey,” said I.

— He assented by an inclination of his head, and proceeded :

“ There was another beautiful Queen who died firmly, kissing her god as she went to the block,—for she was a Catholic too, and Catholics, you know, always carry their god about with them : — I mean the unfortunate Mary. Queens, you see, can be really great ; and this one excelled her Protestant murderer as much in amiable manners as in beauty.”

“ Your examples” said I, “ show that if a Catholic can be detestable, a Catholic can also be amiable ; and surely the piety that leads them to value their crucifix can be no reproach to virtue or to reason.” —

“ Far from it,” cried he, “ and if from what I have said you suspect me to be an enemy to the Catholics you are much mistaken. I think their religion as good as ours, and equally intelligible.”

This I felt was a sarcasm at all religion, and it gave me a pang. Here, here was the source of his errors, of his crimes, — if crimes they were, — of his loss of reputation. What would I not have given for

the eloquence of an apostle, only to have half-persuaded him to be a Christian! His understanding would have completed the conviction: — I feared the feebleness of my ability; — I believe I looked mortified: — I think he perceived it: — I made no reply, and he was silent. An awkward pause ensued, of which there had been several since we got into the chariot.

After some time:

“ I hate myself, Miss Saville,” said he; — “ my understanding is shattered; I am perpetually making blunders; but I hope you will forgive: — if I have said any thing wrong it was not my intention.”

He spoke this with a sweet voice and in a very engaging manner. Who, circumstanced as I was, would not have forgiven him? I not only forgave him, but I would have given my life to secure the salvation of his soul. I was convinced, and am still, that it was originally formed to glorious and immortal ends, but that unfortunate occurrences, the wiles of the grand enemy of mankind, a fatal excess of wealth, and evil associates, had ruined

the nature which Heaven had bestowed upon him :

“ ————— è cieco, sì ; ma tal lo han fatto
Sol la prospera sorte, e gli impj amici,
Che fatto gli hanno della gloria vera
L'orme smarrire.”

I said that it was not for me to forgive, but that my prayers for him should be addressed to the source of mercy. As I said this I looked at him, and I clearly perceived that a tear stood in his eye.

Oh ! Angelica, if you think there is a passion forming at my heart, do not, I beseech you call it love. I never can think of this young man with that passion, and so you will say when you know all, but there is in my mind a warmth respecting him which I fear I must conceal, lest it should be ascribed to that passion — a passion against which I have closely shut all the avenues of my heart, to be opened only on the principle which I have again and again declared to my dear Angelica — congeniality of mind, good sense, and unbounded confidence. — Without these no marriage can be

sacred, and what woman who cherishes immortal hopes will enter into marriage but as a sacrament? No, my sister, I am not in love with Sir Francis Darrell — he is not worthy of it: but I believe him to be a noble spirit in the toils of the arch fiend — and the rescue of him from those toils creates in my heart a warmth completely distinct from, but I think far more ardent than, the passion of love,—at least as far as I can judge by all that I have learned of it. Though I shall never think of him as a lover, I have an enthusiastic conviction that it is possible to save him. I now know something of his character by experience, and I have heard still more than I know; but in spite of all that I have heard, I do not think him depraved. My opinion of him is, that there is a secret and serious cause of remorse preying upon his heart, and that he has suffered himself to be enslaved by that philosophical tyranny of intellect, which treats every thing as nothing that is not fully submitted to its power. Now, Angelica, if any friend, like our dear Abate Cevello,

could but open his eyes to the heavenly principle of forgiveness, and the blessed consequences of repentance, and at the same time persuade him into the belief that the understanding is not disgraced by an humble reception, on trust, of truths beyond the limits of its conception, I think, nay, I am sure,—yes, I am sure,—he would be one of the first of men. I have conversed with my cousins about him ; but before I enter upon my English knowledge of him, I will finish my French history.

I now write at my ease, my dear Angelica, but I must return to acutely painful recollections. In the midst of the peculiar circumstances which occupied my mind, I was not forgetful of my dear, dear father. I was most anxious for his sufferings, but my anxiety was greatly diminished in reflecting that they would be relieved by the express I had sent from St. Germain, and I pleased myself with the thoughts of being soon in his arms, and hearing him join with me in expressing grateful thanks to my preserver.

On our arrival at the hotel, as I got out of the carriage, I begged Sir

Francis Darrell to go up to our apartments with me — I was told he did, but I did not perceive him, nor have I seen him since. My father, Angelica, my beloved father, was in bed, delirious. — Oh! my sister, how must he love your Augusta! And what a blessing to think so! But at that moment the effects of it were despair and anguish. — A dangerous fever had seized him. I flew to his bedside — I fell upon my knees — I supported myself by prayer all night, and, through the mercy of the Almighty, I was heard; — my prayer was granted; — in the morning his delirium subsided, and he knew me: — conceive my joy. — He rapidly recovered — but his impatience to see and thank the deliverer of his daughter would admit no delay, and before he could leave his chamber, he desired me to write a note requesting a visit. Will you believe it, Angelica? the request was refused. — The answer was short — I will enclose a copy of it, as you will discern in it a trait of the extraordinary being I have been trying to make you acquainted with. When

my father was sufficiently recovered to go abroad, which he was in a few days, he called at the hotel where Sir Francis lodged, but he was gone. — I have already written a you a long letter, of which he occupies the greater part, yet I have not done with him in France.

We left Paris on the day appointed : — then and for two or three days before, I thought I observed something disturbing my father's mind. His endeavours to be cheerful only the more convinced me that I was right; — I begged to know it. — Accustomed to open his whole heart to me, — he had taught me that secrets were poison to love — he was now afraid of imparting what must shock and distress me; he therefore reserved the full communication for a future day, but told me at the time that his thoughts turned a great deal upon Sir Francis Darrell, and that the reflections he made rendered him uneasy.

Our journey was pleasant — through a very beautiful country, and we arrived at Rouen without stoppage or impediment. The situation of this ancient city well de-

serves that travellers should halt a day or two to admire it, but our impatience to join our friends impelled us forward. As we approached Havre de Grace, where we purposed to embark for Southampton, — this being the nearest landing place to Woodlee, and where my cousins had appointed to meet us, — our postillion halted at a place called La Botte. On drawing up to the door of a cabaret we passed a carriage on the road, which I immediately knew to be Sir Francis Darrell's. My father, on my mentioning it, exclaimed in an agitated manner —

“Is he in it?”

It was empty.

“It is too true then,” cried he, leaping out of our carriage, in which he left me, and running into the house. I hastened after him — he was talking with the driver of the chariot.

“Sir,” said the man, “I know nothing about it, or the master of it. It has been damaged and was put under my care by my bourgeois, to drive it gently to Havre, where I am to leave it according to the address.”

“Can you give me no account,” said my father, “how it came into your master’s hands?”

“It was brought to our hotel at Bolbec by a boy from Alliquerville, with directions to forward it. I have changed horses here, and I am going on.”

My father then enquired if the carriage was so much damaged as to make travelling in it dangerous.

“Not exactly that,” said the man: “but the wheels are weak.”

We walked to it, and you may imagine what I felt, my dear Angelica, at finding myself again at the door of it. It did not appear to us to be so much out of condition as to make it necessary to abandon it. This was observed by my father, on whose face a gloom seemed to settle.

On taking our seats again in our carriage, I besought him to let me know what was passing in his mind; and, as he could no longer excuse himself he told me, what froze my blood to hear, that the master of the chariot was reported to have been waylaid by ruffians and assassi-

nated, on the road from Paris. The effect this had on me is not to be described. — The report alone was horrible, but here was the appearance of corroboration.

“The ways of providence,” said I, “are inscrutable.” I threw my head upon my father’s shoulder, and the remainder of the journey was passed in silence; — but my thoughts were busy — who were the ruffians? Fear too readily answered, those from whom he had saved me. A melancholy review of all the circumstances, of all that he had done and said, passed in my mind. His countenance and person dwelt on my imagination, accompanied with horror. — The irreligious state of his soul added the heaviest weight to these reflections: — but I will not call forth your sympathy with feelings produced by imagination, and for which, heaven be praised, there was no foundation. The first English newspaper my father took up at Havre informed us not only that he had arrived at his town house in May Fair, but that he had taken his departure from

town for Belmont Lodge, his seat in Northamptonshire; and moreover, in another part of the paper, that he was not murdered in France as had erroneously been reported. This intelligence produced a complete change in our minds. — I felt my heart lightened, and I was livelier than I am by nature; it was like the rebounding of our childish balls at play — the harder they were struck to the ground the higher they rose from it.

The safety of Sir Francis was now corroborated more substantially than the report had been by the sight of his carriage on the road, for the Captain of the packet in the harbour, coming in to engage us to take our passage with him, informed us that he had carried him and Mr. Falstaff over the very last voyage he made, and that he expected his chariot in Havre to take across, for that he had been obliged to leave it on the road to be repaired, and had himself come on with his friend. What misery would a little of this good Captain's knowledge have saved me for the last two hours of our journey! And thus, my dear Angelica,

ends my expedition through France, a memorable one to me, and, if my prayers can avail, it shall not be an unimportant one to the eternal welfare of my preserver.

On Friday morning last we embarked in the Cobourg, Captain Page:—the weather was favourable, the packet very neat and convenient, and every attention was paid to us that we could wish. The passage was of course very pleasant, and we landed before dark the next evening at Southampton, where we were folded in the embraces of our dear George and Caroline. What joy! What happiness! It was almost too much for my father—his recollections perpetually overcame him through the evening, and his enjoyment was mingled with tears. — Having had no son, George had lived years with him as one, and their affection was of a nature not less delightful. I have sometimes wished I had had a brother; but George so fully supplies the place of one, I shall wish it no more.

It was too late to leave Southampton when we landed;—we passed the night at

a good inn in that town, and set out early next morning in George's coach, that we might reach Woodlee before dinner.

I have a thousand things more to say to you, my dearest Angelica, and I will write to you again soon. Perhaps, in the mean time, I shall have the happiness of receiving your expected letter. — I long very much to hear from you — Caroline loves you already. You shall come and verify your Augusta's report ; it is not the report of partiality, but of love. My father is going to write to the Marchese ; meanwhile, we all, including our Godfreys, unite in sincere love to our Pisani.

Adio !

Your affectionate

AUGUSTA.

LETTER XXIII.

John Dartford, Esq. to George Godfrey, Esq.

Florence.

DEAR GODFREY,

WHEN I left England, I little imagined that I should address a letter to you on a subject like that which now occupies my whole mind. My worthy friend, you know me, you know my family, and I hope that it is not flattering myself too much, when I think that it would give you pleasure to promote my happiness. In taking the opportunity afforded by a general peace to see more of the world than books and the partial society of one's own country presented, I managed to lose my heart while strolling along the banks of the Lake of Geneva. I there accidentally met a girl, who, to an uncommon share of beauty, added an

equally uncommon share of good sense : — a glance showed me the former, and a day's excursion in her company convinced me of the latter, and that too notwithstanding her opposition of my early and perhaps hastily contracted ways of thinking. I got and lost sight of her almost at once, which was the cause that, finding I should have no immediate opportunity of paying my court, I took perhaps a characteristic, but I trust not fatal, hasty mode of informing her of the power she had gained over me. I fear it left a most unfavourable impression on her ; — help me to remove it, Godfrey, I beseech you, — for she proves to be your cousin, Miss Saville. I knew not her relation to you till she was gone. I saw her one day, declared my passion the next, and on the third she was away. I wavered a day or two, whether to pursue my travels, or follow the wheels of her father's carriage through France back to England ; but the laugh of my friends, and the serious shake of my dear mother's head at my constitutional want of

perseverance, determined me to climb the hills. If, indeed, my disposition is so changeable as she thinks, let her determine to fix it by uniting with you to help me to gain this beauty, who, combining the charm of mind and of person, will at once fix my life in the steady course of constancy.

Assure your cousin, that Jean Jacques is entirely out of my good graces, and that he has given place to greater men, — to Dante and to Alfieri, of one of whom Tuscany was the native, and of the other, the adopted country. Tell her I still think Rousseau was a clever man, but that he was in fact a *usus naturæ*, a rare production of the most heterogeneous kind; that he was at once a scholar and a fool, a genius and an idiot, a half Christian, half philosopher, a sentimentalist and a villain. Tell her that I am at Florence, that I am intimate at Signa, that I am kindly received by the Pisani, that Angelica talks of nothing but Augusta, and that Angelica's auditor thinks of nothing else, except perhaps a little of Angelica, for talking of her, and

for being excessively like her, if not altogether in her features, in her mode of speaking, and general manner. I am more in love, my dear friend, than I can express, and the God of Love, a thief himself, is at this moment egging me on to a petty larceny from which I fear I shall not be able to abstain. The temptation is so strong, that if ever chance should make me a judge, I should think of it in passing sentence upon those excitable rogues, who possess not the power of resisting the allurements of larceny:—but I must not betray myself, and put it in your power to hang me.

I have written to my mother, and if you should be at Manor House when you receive this, I beg you will go and see her, and consult with her about me; and, for God's sake, put your heads together, my dear, dear friend, to make me the happiest of men; for Augusta, so her friend Angelica calls her,—and there is an irresistible delight in following her example,—is formed to make me happy, and I promise you, Godfrey, I will make her so too. Now, I know your heart is good,

and I depend upon it; — only keep her's free till I come home, and give me a chance to convince her that no man on earth will do more, or half so much, to make her the happiest of women.

Being here I will visit the rest of Italy — it is the country of great men — it is the soil of the Arts. — Its atmosphere is said to be that of love, but on this subject I have a doctrine of my own. — I think love to be the oxygen of the atmosphere in every climate, and who dares assert that old England has not its full share of it? — I shall proceed to Rome by and bye, but must first make an indissoluble friendship with the great men I have mentioned, and also with Tasso, as I do not mean to devote much time to Ferrara. His is a curious and melancholy history, but poets as well as other men may be accounted mad for aspiring to Princesses. In such madness, however, there is greatness; its confinement should be made in palaces, bards should be keepers, and the only physic, music.

Pray write to me: — I cannot expect a letter here — I will hope for it at Rome, where my mother also will direct her next. I have told her I cannot possibly extend my present plan beyond Italy — winter it I fear I must at Naples; but early next year I hope to shake you by the hand. I shall be sorry in the meantime to leave Tuscany; — I prefer the banks of the Arno to all the imaginary beauties of Vevai and Clarens, and I never visited La Meillerie with half the enthusiasm with which, in the reality of sympathy, I have stood at the tomb of your aunt with Angelica Pisani, sheltered—not from a storm, which is the common fine incident of romance from Dido to Julia, but — from the rays of the noonday sun, by the grove at Signa.

The more I see of the Pisani family the more I like them. I wish I could bring them to England with me: — I am a great deal with them. Signorisa Pisani is a most engaging lovely creature. She has a delightful old aunt here too, and I have entered into a complete friendship

with her confessor, the venerable Abate Cevello, from whom I have had tidings of your beautiful cousin which enraptured me, and will, I know, immediately reconcile my mother to the proposal. I trust too, that our professing the same *faith* will weigh considerably in my favour. I shall bring her letters from the Marchese, Signora Bentivole, her sister Angelica, and the Abate Cevello. I am more and more convinced it will be a happy match, and I see no impediment to it, but what may arise from an overdelicacy on her part respecting the suddenness of my Helvetic declaration, and the folly of Wolmar's wife, which you and my mother will easily remove. She can assure Miss Saville that the rapidity of my imagination and actions is perfectly consistent with the affection of a son; — and you, my dear Godfrey, will tell her how compatible it is with friendship; and together you will prove to her that it is consequently no bad ingredient in the formation of a lover and a husband.

My best compliments to Mrs. Godfrey. — Tell her she must befriend me. Write to Rome.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN DARTFORD.

LETTER XXIV.

Sir Francis Darrell to Mr. Vernon.

Southampton, October * * *

MY DEAR VERNON,

It was my intention to cross the Channel from Dieppe to Brighton ; but, the ability of my carriage to perform the journey becoming suspicious before I reached Rouen, I was persuaded by Falstaff, whom I overtook there, to trust the safety of my sacred person to his conveyance. I accordingly left mine in charge of a dealer in coaches to be sent forward gently ; and, agreeing to change my route for the convenience of my companion, — here I am. He is going into Somersetshire : — I start presently for town, where I shall stay only to-morrow. — The next day I am off for Belmont, where I hope to see you soon, as you are thrown out at Manor House and can't make love to

Lady Mount-Vernon, whom you nevertheless so piously devote to your Vortex. — She deserves better, though her lord may not.

In spite of Saville's illness I had like to have been taken in for a dose of gratitude : — he invited me to his bed-room. Had it been to sit up with him, read him a sermon, or hand him his physic, I would have gone : — but to sit down by him, listen to a sentimental oration, and be forced to swallow thanks, — was what I could not do ; so I cut the trial short with a civil regret, and a sincere wish for all the happiness that this world affords — I believe I said, more than it affords — but they will take it for granted I meant *all*.

You see by the newspapers that I have been murdered ; — this I thought nothing of, but the paragraph relative to Miss Saville, which of course you have seen, has given me very serious uneasiness, which perhaps I deserve, for I remember to have credited and laughed at such paragraphs. I trust that Mr. Godfrey has been careful to prevent those papers

from falling into her hands. I am sure she is among the few whose delicacy shrinks from the most favourable publicity, and what would be her feelings to see her name so unworthily hawked about the kingdom? Nay, blown to every quarter of the world? And this is one of the curious offsprings of British liberty — for we meet with it in no other country. France is a free country, and has as many *Journaux* as the rest of the world put together; but private feeling is never outraged by supposed circumstances and sarcastic inferences. America is a free country, and public affairs and conduct are sharply enough handled in their National Intelligencers; but the retired walk of female life is not watched for the purpose of devoting circumstances, right or wrong, to the gratification of a prurient — a vortical curiosity.

If I could bring my mind to condemn the laws which protect the freedom of the press, it would be on seeing such vicious consequences of it, when it is in the power of a paltry spirit to stab in jest. You know this licentiousness

has not been sparing of its venom on me:—I never for that reason objected to the press; but women—such women as Saville's daughter—are tender plants; they shrink and bend like the Mimosa, at the slightest touch, and never should wantonly and jestingly be dragged before the public. I do not dislike seeing the cup of liberty overflowing, provided the liquor be genuine; but the infected froth of libel and malignity flows not from a pure source. None but a malignant heart or a foolish head could have caught the first report of Mr. Saville's misfortune, and turned it into an elopement of his daughter. I cannot bear to think that this noble-minded creature's feelings should be exposed to the rude blasts of our northern freedom, and it requires time to be habituated to them. It is long since I cared so much about a woman—I have liked them as pretty, trifling, brittle things, and in that way have generally, that is some time ago, been enamoured with this or with that—but never seriously caring about any long, or breaking my heart.—But here is a

woman, whose mind and manner, in very peculiar circumstances placed for a day under my close and solitary observation, have created in me a degree of respect, that I am not sensible of feeling for any other human being, male or female, and that too, which is equally extraordinary, while her beauty has had no power over my heart. I know you will say it is otherwise : — but you will be convinced — nor for the world would I have it otherwise.

Adieu ! Write to me immediately at Belmont, as my movements will depend on your letter.

Ever your's sincerely,

F. DARRELL.

P. S. The chaise is at the door. — By the bye, I shall pass through Alton, and shall enquire for the health of Rufus's statues. Give me more of him I beseech you, for I am sinking fast into a gloomy fit.

LETTER XXV.

Mr. Vernon to Sir Francis Darrell.

Mount Vernon. * * *

I owe you a volume, my dear Darrell, but how shall I repay it either with matter or interest? I have read it with alternate delight and vexation.—The whole of your adventure with the sleeping beauty in the wood is delicious; but your reflections and comments are in general *sombre*, and absolutely alarm me for your senses. What in the name of wonder is there in the circumstance of some satyr of a lover stealing a beautiful nymph, to set your bile afloat, against civilised savages, and laughing monsters? It is always better to laugh than to cry—and you see, if the satyrs of antiquity are not extinct, neither are the knights errant of the middle-ages; and, though we have no longer any Olympic machinery to save the innocence of immaculate

maidens by turning them into trees or streams, we have sleepy postillions and convenient mounds, to nick the time of their danger, and strolling *guardian angels* to protect them.

I must have you rouse yourself, Darrell — I will not have you thus sinking daily more and more into that gloomy gulph of meditation which can serve no purpose in the world but to deprive life of all its zest, and turn the gay verdure of the globe into sable ashes. Why be the sophisticated Darrell? Why not, what nature made him — animated, joyous, quick in the perception of pleasure, and eager in the enjoyment of it? I will not consent to your talking of the world as of some cimmerian crypt — or of satiety, and I know not what. Joy fills the air for you : turn thee to the feast, mental or personal — Augusta presents the one, Lady Betty the other. Take your choice of one or both, but no whining, I beseech you, Darrell.

I will be at the Lodge early in the week, to do my best to rouse you, and I will bring Rufus down with me

as an assistant. — You are not aware that I shall be doing you a double kindness, a kindness active and passive; the first by his presence at Belmont, the last by his absence from Hampshire; for I find by a letter I have just received from him, that the formidable rogue is edging off from my married dame to your rescued spinster. He is three quarters in love with her, and would be the other fourth, if it were not for her religion, for verily he findeth, what perhaps you have yet to learn, that her soul is devoted to the old lady of Babylon, for which reason he thinks her, if any thing, less lovely than La Belle. Now, tell me if the passive service I shall render you by the removal of a rival will not be equally valuable with that of creating a laugh, — the active one?

You cannot imagine how much Rufus's friendship for me is increased, and how far his confidence is proceeding to the developement of his real character, — but more of this when we meet. I invited him down to see me, and talk about his statues: — he was at

Mount-Vernon by return of post, and spent three days in making Lord Mount-Vernon and Lady Barbara wonder and laugh, and in ingratiating himself with Lady Mount-Vernon, by heavenly talk and solemn doggerel. This is just what takes with Mrs. Godfrey : they see in him simplicity exalted by piety, and what they cannot make out in his expressions they find explained in *lookings*, for never did I see a fellow so look-meaning, when he has none. If he is not much nearer the centre of the Vortex than I am, I'll be hanged.

But before I proceed with Rufus, let me sincerely and seriously give you joy of an exploit so justly productive of real pleasure to you, — a pleasure certainly beyond all that the gratifications of the senses, or the triumphs of gallantry can boast. I feel it as you do, but I would not act as you do. Say what you will, it is evident to me that Miss Saville has made a very strong impression on your mind ; and as you know I make a distinction between the grand stream of unsophisticated life and the Vortex, it is not

inconsistent with my character, nor insulting to yours, to say that, circumstanced like you, I would turn my thoughts to one, who in spite of superior personal beauty had first impressed a feeling of respect upon my heart. From my late observation of you, excuse me, my dear Darrell, I fear the progress of your mind is in an accelerated velocity from misanthropy and tædium to an habitual melancholy, under which you will sink. — Seriously then, if the Vortex are mistaken respecting the affair between you and Lady Betty, now in full circulation, — and your journey half makes me suspect that it is a blast from a Vortex trumpet — I do from my heart advise you to think — of what? — To tell you the truth, I do not believe you will be startled at the word — matrimony. I begin to be persuaded that it is the only thing to save you. —

However, should I be mistaken, don't be affronted. — If Lady Betty has at last liked somebody better than herself, and will restore you to spirits — I consent, and that the lovely cousin of my friend Godfrey be left to the suitoring of my

friend Rufus, who is about to commence his suit, with the compliment of taking her opinion as a Florence connoisseur on the pygæ of the *Venus*, who, — *Faunus*, and the *Water-nymph* being also properly stationed, for the latter were immediately uncased on his return to Hants Cottage, at my request, to satisfy the impatience of Miss Kitty, — has taken her place in the grove at the end of the garden, close to the London road, from which it is screened by some common hazels.

But I cannot fly off thus in a tangent, from your sleeping beauty. In spite of my propensity to take things on the laughing side, your account, connected with your story of her unfortunate mother, has excited in my mind a most serious interest for Miss Saville — an interest not likely to interfere with that of any suitor for her hand. She is beautiful, and sensible, and amiable, and all that; but she has no fortune, and I am a younger brother — Q. E. D. according to the pithy initials of the mathematician; but there is no such corollary flowing from a Belmont proposition. I don't know that

she would have you, Darrell,—for, though there is no sort of objection to your person or estate, your character, which as you say I have been and am emulating for its eminence in the Vortex, stands, I fear, devilish bad among your well-trained vestals, and their connections in the world at large—but then there are some weighty considerations in your favour. The first I know you would never think of relying upon, but it is in its nature the most powerful. If she has no prior lover, if her friends have not guarded her against you, why then, I say, it would be very unnatural if she did not sometimes think of opening her eyes in your arms in the wood, of waking on your bosom in the chariot, all with proper gratitude and nothing else, till your blue and her brown eyes, collecting by the imperceptible collision of rays, a sufficient portion of electric fluid, elicit sparks of warmer intelligence. In the second place, if she could but be made to hope that the world wrongs you, or that you could be led to give it the lie in future, the pride of such a victory would

prompt an inclining ear. Another consideration is, — I think you have already gained her father's heart. I don't mention your fortune or your title, for I know where those could be recommendations you would never fix. If you are surprised at my advice, take the credit of it yourself.—The sincere regard I have for you suggests it as a mode of saving you, not only from the world, but from yourself—and certainly I should not think of devoting you to a state of which we have seen enough to induce us to steer clear of it, but from a conviction that you have met with a woman born to render it what it ought to be. Meditate, and impart the effects of your meditation when we meet.

I am sorry the paragraph in the newspapers has pained you so much, and I hope it will never meet her eyes. It is already gone by — I had received your letter from Paris before it appeared, and for the first time in my life felt shocked at such a paragraph so representing such an action, and such a woman. I would have had it contradicted, but that con-

traditions only keep alive what the sooner falls into oblivion without them. Besides, her name is not much known, and if she has not seen it, no harm is done. I nevertheless wrote to Powell to call upon the editor, and enquire what grounds he had for a report of her having eloped with you, and he was assured that it was a fact; for she was missing the day you left Paris, and was seen with you in your chariot the next day. These were indeed facts; but when facts can be so distorted, how dangerous is haste to truth! — You see I can moralize out of the Vortex, but now to return a little to it.

Veramore is the chosen *cortejo* of Lady Cambridge — I saw him with her and her lord as they passed through Hereford, in their way to Monmouthshire. — She is not received at Mount-Vernon: my sister calmly but firmly shuts her door on those who are decidedly established for life in the Vortex, though she is slow to admit conviction; — she laughs at those whom she sees dashing in and out at the exterior circle, as if trying their

strength ; and she has more than once, by good-humoured admonition, drawn a thoughtless companion completely from its influence. I give her credit for her intention, and for the wisdom she tries to instil, but that seems her enjoyment, which, like bigots who would force their faith on others, she would compel her friends to adopt. — Wisdom is but a sombre principle ; let those who find their account in it embrace it with all its symbols of *serpents, owls, and spears* ; but let the joyous, the light, the gay, have their *thyrsis*, and their *marotte*, and let them laugh and dance to the ringing of their *Bells*.

Il vaut mieux être heureux qu' être sage.

The ringing of the *bells* continued at Bramblebear Hall for about a week after your departure, in spite of the loaded brow and breast with aching void, that indisposed the priestess of the temple to the due performance of the rites. “What can be the matter with Lady Betty,” was the *whispered* question, from every guest to every guest. The answers were

the prescriptive ones of the Vortex. To the first time of putting, "What can be the matter with *Lady Betty*?" — the answer was, "Ha, ha, ha!" To the second time of putting, "*What* can be the matter with *Lady Betty*?" — the answer was, "Don't you see?" with the first reply melted to a smile. To the third time of putting, "~~WHAT—CAN—BE—THE—MAT-~~
~~TER~~ with *Lady Betty*?" Answer: "Stuff, Darrell, to be sure." Poor Veramore, was dismayed, but, not disdaining to officiate at a shrine deserted by a more distinguished votary, he was kneeling on the first step of the altar, when the Miss Cravens' eye-winking brother turned his incense into a conflagration of the whole concern.

You once promised me a laugh at your appointment as guardian of the sacred steps; but, though you have smothered it under nobler matter, something of it I caught from Veramore. He tells me that Bramblebear considered you as his bosom friend, and, in spite of *les on dit*, believed that you would make an exception in his favour from the esteem which

he was sure you had for him, but that the eye-winking Mr. Craven, who means his company to see only one side of his face at a time, roused some uxorious doubts as to the solidity of the foundation on which he had rested his confidence, which ended in Bramblebear's giving you a reinforcement in his own person, instead of directly relieving guard, which might have been followed by a breach, that would almost break his heart as soon as the loss of his wife. With respect to Veramore, he had neither received the office from the husband, nor permission from the wife to enter upon it; but he thought it befitting the duty of a gallant to attempt her heart on the first favourable opportunity. Lady Betty had made a party of whist for an old visitor, with whom she had engaged Miss Craven, Miss Belcher, and Rivers. Veramore chose to stand by — Lady Betty left the room. Tim, so Veramore calls young Craven, whose features, he says, possess each its peculiar endowment of archness, — the eye its wink, the lip its twist, the nose its dip, the cheek its bulge by the

ministry of the tongue, which, it seems, is almost the whole of its office, as it very seldom serves for a vocabulary instrument. — Tim, having nothing to say, or to listen to, opened the backgammon-tables, and, setting them before Bramblebear, drew a chair, and unceremoniously threw for the dice. Veramore, in the middle of their game, left the room, but Bramblebear followed before he had said three sentences to Lady Betty.

“Want any thing, Veramore?” said he. “Oh! with Lady Betty! well now, but come now into the room.”

“Take Mr. Veramore with you, I’ll come presently,” says she.

“Do so,” says he. “Come, Veramore.” — And so the two wise-acres march back like the two kings of Brentford; the one to look over the whist-table, the other to Tim and backgammon. Presently enters the lady; she and Veramore have nothing to do; he proposes a party at piquet, and down they set to point, quint, and quatorze.

“Ay, do,” says Bramblebear, his back turned to the position General Vera-

more's coup-d'œil had pitched upon to occupy for ulterior tactics. Things now proceeded *en-regle* : the sounds of "Odd trick" — "Two by honours" — "Can you one?" vibrated the air over the card-table. "Très-ace" — "Cinq-très" — "Sixes" rattled from the boxes and the lungs of the dice-throwers. "Point fifty-five" — "Quart major" — "Three knaves" were gently accented by the piquete players. — All went on in tranquil pastime.

"I want but a knave to secure my point," whispered Lady Betty.

"Eh!" says Bramblebear, looking over his shoulder, "Oh, you are discarding."

"I want a knave, my love," says she.

"What, to play you a trick?"

"No, to win me one."

He smiled at her wit, old as it was, and rattled his box.

The usual sounds now went on at the whist-table, and the backgammon-table, but ceased at the third board. — If Bramblebear's back was to the piquet-table, you may have already supposed that Tim's face

was turned that way : the flexible point of Tim's nose had dipped unobserved by his antagonist ; the twist of his lip passed equally without being understood ; till he added the irresistible wink of his left eye, when, directed by the ray of the right one, he slowly turned his head, and his globe-eyes rested petrified on the objects of Tim's wink.

“ Will you discard this ? ” was the last question put by Veramore, as he had placed his hand over her's, and kept it fast to the table ; from which moment all the conversation — remember I have it from himself — was carried on by their eyes. Every syllable, according to him, was in his favour, till, perceiving the Ogre's eyes, she exclaimed, “ What do you mean, Sir ? ” and gave Veramore a box on the ear.

Up started the indignant Bramblebear, ceased the silent joys of whist, dipped the nasal point of Tim. — The knave, who thought himself wanted for a point, found himself completely piqued : he swore they were a pair of wrongheads — and forswore Bramblebear-hall for the future. And

when the thing rung, as ring it did soon throughout the Vortex, the Darrell sentence was reconsidered, and one in ten were for annulling it, so never did Lady Betty stand higher in her husband's esteem, or was ever nestled to his doating bosom with more love.

This is Veramore's story, as I collected it in substance, and I hope I have not done him injustice in dramatizing portions of it. He added, that he did not care, for he was satisfied, by her perpetually calling him "Darrell," that she was inclined only to make him a secondary object, and such he would be to no woman — not he. I had a great mind to ask him whether he thought himself the primary one in the sight of Lady Standish : but I saw, through all the shading which he gave his picture, that he had been pretty well mortified ; and a fellow feeling with his Vortical disappointment restrained me. How soon he will again find himself a discarded knave I will not surmise : but it cannot be long before that event takes place. He has ten times too much personal vanity, and ten times ten

too little *nous* for Lady Standish. — For Heaven's sake keep up your spirits. I foresee a capital winter; meanwhile remember my maxim, — Eschew melancholy, and defy the foul fiend.

I cannot quit the Vortex without a word or two on La Belle, for I see you are inclined to take her under your protection. Independent of the glory of being the favourite of a woman ranking so high on the lists of beauty and reputation, I really feel that she has more of my heart than I ever intended to sport within the Vortex. I catechised Rufus without letting him into my secret, and I have discovered that I am not indifferent to her. She has gone so far as to say; that there is no man whom she wishes better, with other gratifying compliments. Now, Darrell, after this, can you have the conscience to say, “Stop?” You may take my word for it, La Belle is born for the Vortex, and if I did not think your repeated alarumbell was rung by the gloomy spirit that possesses you, I should impute it to Vortical views, for I know, though little ac-

acquainted with her, that you admire her. I will still say, that if I find myself mistaken, she may be a Zenobia for me, if Godfrey have no objection. I hope he has no suspicion of me : he did not invite me to return with him into Hampshire, —but that may be accounted for from his expecting his uncle and cousin, whom he was to meet at the sea-side. I long to see this cousin of his, this beauty of yours, but one must give them time to get familiar with one another's features and ways, or I should certainly have made an angle across the country to bring the freshest news to Belmont.

And now, though late, let me thank you for your prior letter from Paris. Its claim to prior notice was superseded by the events which have interested me so much in the one that followed. When you wrote it, you told me that you should not remain in France long enough to receive another letter : could I have foreseen your being detained, I should not have delayed answering it, for it delighted me beyond measure. The gouty young widower of fifty pricing coloured

clothes in the first tearful month of his weeping sables, confiding his religious feelings and amatory anticipations to his old friend, and at the same time emptying his purse at the card-table ; the kind, uxorious encourager of gallants finding his wife at the ball, and paying the German Baron's hotel bills for the protection of his name in the journeyings of his wife, I own, are exquisite : but take this with you, that these are very inconsiderate Vortical personages, who have never thought attention to the *Spartan virtue* worth their while. I am doubly obliged to them, for the relief they afforded you, in giving a pleasant direction to your random nerves, and for the excitement they administered to my risible muscles. We will yet laugh at them together, in spite of your lounge at laughing monsters.

Before I quit the ball, I must admire your accurate portrait of the Sleeping Beauty in her waking moments, and her dancing trim. It was a *dazzling blaze* ! When I have an opportunity of comparing it with the original, I will give you my opinion of the resemblance. As to

her not waltzing ; since she seems not to be born for the Vortex, it is but a suitable abstinence in her : but in spite of *your* Roman fastidiousness on the subject of dancing, and *Falstaff's* concurrence with you on waltzing, I maintain, whether you allow it or not to be a genuine inspiration of Terpsichore, that it is a very sweet and pretty movement, and one of the most operative agents in the delights of the Vortex. One thing, I confess, surprises me — that it had its origin in the country of the Wielands ; — that men who dared not kiss the little fingers of their mistresses under a probation (*read* Jobation) of five years, should nightly fold them in their embraces, and spin them along in the swimming maze you describe. I cannot help thinking, however, that the movement has received great amendments both in England and France, in the rapid *march* of the arts and sciences.

* * * * *

Four o'clock. — Going to dress for dinner.

* * * * *

I cannot come to you, my dear Darrell — not for the wealth of Belmont can I come ; and so you will say when you hear that La Belle and her cousin are to be in Herefordshire next week. My brother and Lady Barbara, who are perpetually galloping, like wild Arabs, in every direction over the country, have brought the tidings, which they learned from a man of Godfrey's, while they drew up at the porter's lodge of Manor-house, to tighten the girths of her Ladyship's saddle. You shall hear from me as soon as I have seen the party ; and if you remain at Belmont Lodge I will join you : but let me hear from you directly.

To console you I send my fond Rufus's account of the arrival of the travellers at Woodlee ; but to clear a passage in his letter, the following annotation is necessary — The grove in which the Venus is placed is, as I told you, close to the road, and she is only hid from the sight of passengers by some shrubs. Talking of the situation, I laughingly pretended to persuade him to cut down the hazels. He

was not very sure that I joked, and his observations on my advice are in consequence of his having decided in his mind that I was serious. I get a laugh now and then from my brother and Lady Bab, at his improved taste ; but my sister's laugh, she declares, is at us, and not at him ; for he appears to be a very good young man and ought not to be made game of. By the bye, I did not fail to make public proclamation of your equestrian menace to the said Lady Barbara, who laughed, as she called you an impudent fellow, and feels no way abashed at my brother's occasional joke upon the inapplicability of Coventry law to stone Godiyas.

Ever sincerely your's,

L. VERNON.

LETTER XXVI.

Rufus Palmer, Esq. to Mr. Vernon.

Hants Cottage.

DEAR VERNON,

It is truly out of my power to express my sincere acknowledgments for the very great proofs of the kindness of the whole family at Mount-Vernon during the happy days I spent with you in Herefordshire. Your accompanying me to the field to give me a day's sporting, though you are not yourself addicted to that pleasure, — the condescension of the noble Lord in mounting me upon one of his most esteemed hunters, — his affability after my fall from the noble beast, whom I could not restrain with all my force, and I have tolerable muscles too, from following the hounds over that lofty five-barred gate, — his placent sym-

pathy of countenance, and friendly advice to return to the house, — your readiness in returning with me, — even the good-humoured laugh of your cousin, the Lady Barbara Lewis, and her agreeable jokes at night when she found my neck was safe, — though upon my *say* so, I did at first verily surmise that my collar-bone was broken, — were instances of uncommon attention and kindness: — but of the Lady Mount-Vernon's nothing can equal my conception — and well truly may I say so, finding her conversation so agreeably congenial with my own, and her approbation of those pure doctrines, without which we are lost sheep. — Nay, my dear friend, you must allow me to talk thus — I have the greatest esteem and affection for you, indeed I have, and deservedly, and therefore it is my affectionate and zealous wish that you would converse more with her angelical Ladyship than with that extraordinary gentleman whose uncorrected but fertile imagination could do with Lady Barbara Lewis what Shakespear somewhere says —

~~body forth~~ body forth

The forms of things unknown,
Turn them to shape, and to give to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.

Not that the Lady Barbara herself can be called an airy nothing; for though she may be said to fly on horseback, she has, as you observed that day, very substantial supporters: but I mean his idea, his airy idea of giving her a Coventry ride on my grounds. No, you may assure him, as to a local habitation at Hants Cottage, it shall never be; first, because it is fundamentally profane, without the taste which recommends our goddess in the Grove; and, in the next place, I own to you I should not approve of any memorial of that day's hunt; for I do agree with you, as I do in most things, though excuse me not in all, that hunting is a rough, if not rude, if not a savage, if not a — I must not write the word — pastime. — But you need not tell this to the obliging Lord Mount-Vernon; and remember, my dear friend, that it is your own way of thinking; the words too your own, *hellish* and all. By

my *say* so, I never did in all my life see any thing like your cousin. — Bob, the Alton boy, rises like a dart in his stirrups ; but she beats him hollow ; — and as for the gripe her knee must have taken of the pummel of her saddle, when she went over that five-barred gate, I do imagine, saving her modesty, it must have made the whole ham black and blue. — Much good may it do her Ladyship.

And now I have great news for you. — The great Beauty who was said to have run away with your friend in France, which I have always contradicted since you told me it was not true, is arrived at Woodlee. Last week Mr. and Mrs. Godfrey went down in their coach to Southampton to meet her and her father, and they returned together on *Sunday*. I wish they had taken any other day to travel. I was in hope they would have arrived in time for evening service : but they were just in time for another service, that of dinner. The hope being fresh in my thoughts when I called, I could not help expressing my disappointment at not seeing the travellers. in

their pew, in the afternoon. Mrs. G. expressed an amiable sorrow ; but Miss Saville did not seem in the least abashed, at which I was surprised : but oh ! how shocked was I, my friend, in spite of your free way of speaking, to learn, on urging Mrs. G. to account for the want of fervour in so young, so beautiful a creature, that her soul was gone astray with the scarlet one ! Yes, friend Vernon, the beauty is a papist ! Oh ! friend, friend, what would I not do to lead her back to the right path ! I have had two glimpses of her since she arrived, and scarcely could I either time prevent my eyes from gazing on her, in spite of her reprobate state and the presence of our good friend Mrs. G., who, it must be confessed, adds to *her* charms the beauty of a truly evangelical spirit. I feel for Mrs. G. a very great regard ; truly, as I confided to you, a most unaccountably great regard ;—and now, to write with equally friendly confidence, I do declare to you that I feel also most great regard for Miss S. but not also unaccountable, for there are holy impediments *there*, and not so *here*.—

There, there must be perversion, *here* there might be conversion, and that, far from being a holy impediment, you see is evidently a holy excitement. We are, as you say, strange creatures, my friend, and know not what we would be at. — I hope you will come this way soon that I may have the advantage of your good advice.

There is an account in this day's paper of your friend's rescuing Miss S. instead of running away with her, and all the particulars. — I wonder if it is all true : pray tell me, for you must know. — He must be an odd man, methinks, who can act so nobly, and yet have such queer fancies. Mr. Saville speaks warmly of him ; Mr. Godfrey compassionately ; Mrs. G. soberly ; and Miss S. gratefully, — nay, does not scruple to own that in the ardour of gratitude she kissed his hand. She is a sweet girl : — you can't conceive how pretty she looked when she said this, and how innocent ; yet truly it was an odd thing to confess. — I understand she has very great taste, and when I can be a little more free with her, I purpose con-

sulting her upon the statues. Meanwhile, my dear friend, without meaning the slightest disrespect to your taste, I shall let the hazels of the grove on the road-side remain. Mr. Hamilton, who has already wonderfully improved the grounds of Hants Cottage, says they must by no means be cut away, and he gives a substantial reason, which must have escaped your notice.

“ Sir,” said he, “ if all the world had as good taste as Mr. Vernon, we would have those hazels down directly, and let all the world have a sight of your statue : but I have not to tell you, Mr. Palmer, that tastes differ, and that John Bull, who passes by your shrubbery daily, thinks the climate of his country requires covering, particularly in the open air. — You would be hooted and *your statue* stoned. — You might roar out *Praxiteles* or *Canova* as long as you pleased ; John would pelt her, as long as there was any thing to pelt at.”

I know, my dear Mr. Vernon, you will allow this to convince you : — Miss Palmer is convinced ; but Kitty shrugs a

dissenting shoulder, and does not see why one should be afraid of the vulgar.

You will be pleased to hear that the Faunus and the Water-nymph are elegantly placed ; the cases were opened as soon as I got home. Kitty admires them very much. Miss Palmer is passive ; Martha says nothing ; and the other servants have given over laughing. What can be a greater proof of your being right ? They have got used to it, and use, I take it, has a great deal to do with taste—it reconciles us to odd things.

I have no more to add at present, but to beg my very best respects to my Lord and Lady, and to your cousin the Lady Barbara Lewis, of whose horse-adhesive property I have the highest admiration,

I am, in all truth,

Your friend

RUFUS PALMER.

P.S. Kitty desires me not to forget the compliments of my sisters.

LETTER XXVII.

Sir Francis Darrell to Mr. Saville.

Belmont Lodge.

SIR,

I AM happy to hear of the safe arrival of yourself and Miss Saville in England. — The conversation I had the honour of holding with you in Paris is no doubt fresh in your memory, and renders it unnecessary for me to repeat the topics of it, farther than to specify that I have given directions to Mr. — of Lincoln's Inn, who is my solicitor, to consult with any gentleman you shall appoint, and take the proper measures to settle our business in the manner we talked upon with as little delay as possible. I fear the transaction will not be so expeditiously accomplished as I wish; but whatever time the forms of it may require, the substance requires none. I consider

Grove Park as already your's ; and I have too high an opinion of the justness of your ideas to suspect that you will do otherwise, on those grounds of pride which turn some men away from imaginary obligations. On my honour I feel the obligation to be more on my side. I am not giving you any thing : — I expect to be paid the money due. The only concession I make is affording you an opportunity of purchasing your own estate ; and you relieve my mind of a weight, real or imaginary, which is doing me a favour. I believe I have already said something like this ; and I beg your pardon for the repetition. — I entreat you not to refuse me the additional gratification of knowing that you consider yourself as master of your estate as soon as you receive this : — you are certainly so considered on the spot.

It will give me much pleasure to accompany you thither to give you possession : but, should circumstances prevent this, it is by no means necessary : the house is ready for your reception, and the person in charge of it prepared to

Take your orders. I am at this moment uncertain of my own movements; but the honour of a letter from you appointing a time shall determine me.

I am, Sir,

Your faithful, obedient servant,

F. DARRELL.

LETTER XXVIII.

Mr. Saville to Sir Francis Darrell.

Manor-House, Hereford.

DEAR SIR,

YOU have given me some pain, I think unnecessarily, in your determination to avoid my acknowledgments for a service almost, if not altogether, unparalleled. To a mind, constituted like yours, I can readily believe that the warm expressions of gratitude would rather give uneasiness than pleasure: but I would have endeavoured to regulate accordingly the language my heart might have dictated. But, in the excess of the feeling under which you acted, it escaped you, that to be passive on my part must not only be painful to me, but would in the nature of things incur a just detestation, so that without meaning it, you escaped pain by inflicting it. I shall not be content

till I have once pressed your hand to my heart :—it is all I ask, nor will I ever after attempt to interfere with your habits.

With respect to Grove Park, much as I appreciate the action, it holds so low a degree, in comparison with the life I received at your hands, that in conformity with your mode of proceeding, I will, without further ceremony for the present, consider myself as the master of it. Allow me to say barely, I thank you for the ease with which I recover that title. But in saying this, I must beg you to listen to some conditions. Instead of charging the estate with the bonds, I wish to pay them off immediately, and am provided with the money. I moreover wish to appoint a receiver for the estate, for the purpose of liquidating the mortgage-debt annually, till it is entirely paid off. I would say that you should nominate the person, but that I perceive, from the manner of your viewing this transaction, that I shall gratify you in saying, I wish it to be my nephew Mr. Godfrey. I have of course communicated

your letter to him, and he is willing to comply with any request in our affairs which we may jointly make to him. I am at his house, near Hereford. — We came here but yesterday, with the intention, in about a week or ten days, to make a little tour in these counties before the winter sets in. — If, however, it better suits your convenience now, he and I will set out immediately for Northamptonshire; otherwise, we will proceed according to our first intention and stretch across the country about three weeks from this time. — Honour me with an unceremonious wish on this occasion; and, if you do not summon us directly, name the day for meeting, and we will either meet you, at Peterborough, or wait upon you at Belmont Lodge.

Mr. Godfrey and the whole family beg to be allowed to add to mine their grateful sense of your conduct in every respect towards me.

I am, with very ardent feelings,

Dear Sir,

Your's most truly,

GILBERT SAVILLE.

LETTER XXIX.

Sir Francis Darrell to Mr. Saville.

Belmont Lodge, October —

DEAR SIR,

I AM sincerely sorry that I have given you any pain : believe me, if it was unnecessary, it was also unintentional. This is not the first time I have been wrong in my conceptions of things, and I fear it will not be the last. I feel the justness of your remark, and am convinced that the gratification of my own humour blinded me to its effects on your feelings. I am therefore ready to atone for it in any way you please. — I acknowledge that the service I rendered you is of incalculable value — I know not any benefit that could exceed the restoration of such a daughter to a father so sensible of her value : but I must at the same time observe, that if accidental services of this

kind entitled every fortunate agent to claims upon the heart of the person benefited, the world would have to bear even more odious burdens than those which are already thrown upon it, and we should see rogues bestriding the few honourable persons appearing here and there in the heterogeneous system of society, who are sufficiently elbowed already. You will not suppose that I mean to represent myself to you as one of the rogues, yet you will find plenty of tongues to tell you that I am; and even your nephew, generous as I know him to be, will hint to you the prudence of definitely marking, and firmly adhering to, the line between gratitude and intimacy. However, Sir, whatever may be my demerits, I will be egotist enough to say, that the slightest deviation from respect towards you or your daughter, in act, word, or thought, is not among them; and I leave it entirely to you and Mr. Godfrey to command me in all respects as you please.

I shall leave this place to go to Clifton, in Gloucestershire, for about a fortnight,

but shall return by the 25th. On the 26th I will take a lodging at Grove Park, where I trust that you and all the family with you will alight. Rightly I should offer to stay with you, or in the neighbourhood, to do honour to your arrival; but there will not be wanting much more honour than I can do it; and I am indispensably engaged in some affairs which require my being in Somersetshire in the beginning of November.

I remain, with sincere respect,

Dear Sir,

Your's most truly,

F. DARRELL.

LETTER XXX.

Sir Francis Darrell to Mr. Vernon.

Belmont Lodge.

I THANK you, my dear Vernon, for your exhilarating letter, which, in spite of one or two blows on the cranium, has raised images which have served to amuse me occasionally ever since I received it. — I do not know which produces the finest phantasmagoria, — the coxcomical, or the evangelical, gallant; but the fop is clearly the less mischievous animal of the two; for his prey sights him at a distance, as the hen the hawk, and clucks alarm; whereas Nicodemus, like the fox, approaches with a velvet paw, and in the twilight shade of hypocrisy carries off your poultry before you are aware that he is on your ground. Not that I think Godfrey in any danger from Rufus — his prowling, take my word for it, will be on

his own manor. I do not think with you that he is in the Vortex: the mantle worn there is very different from his, — it is the airy one of philosophical virtue with the tissue of indifference. — Rufus's is a heavy cloak which renders the wearer disgusting to the light spirits of those unevangelical circles. — It is equally infectious, and more mischievous in the larger world; but it produces tragedies, not comedies. Mrs. Godfrey's attention to him is a proof with me that she is *not* of the Vortex; and I incline to think that her kindness is nothing more than a secret charitable kind of patronage which her natural good disposition impels her to bestow upon a young man whom she sees to be weak, but believes to be well-meaning and religious. — But if *she* is in no danger from his wiles, that is not the case with simpler minds, for which sanctity has powerful charms, and may be gosselled into folly and repentance. If I am not mistaken, Mrs. Martha is his victim.

Seeing that you have excused yourself as prettily from crossing the country to

Belmont, as the Prince of Denmark does from crossing the stage to sit by his aunt-mother, I excuse you too. — Indeed I am glad to do it, for being in no humour at present to play the fool at Bramblebear Hall, I wish to leave the neighbourhood, and I hope to be at Clifton in time to overtake Falstaff, who wished me to make an excursion with him across the Severn.

I know the Woodlee group are in Herefordshire : — let me find a letter from you at Malvern, which I shall take in my way back, having an appointment with Mr. Saville in Northamptonshire on the 26th of this month, to put him in possession of Grove Park. It is determined, however, that I am not to have the satisfaction of the bonds being liquidated by degrees, with the other debts of the estate — they are to be paid off immediately. It is right ; — why should I attempt to prolong obligations over them ? — Yet I felt an extraordinary pleasure in the thought, which accompanied me all the way from Paris. I was certainly not entitled to this satisfaction : — it belonged of right to a better man, to Mr. Godfrey, and I will

take his money. — He is to be appointed receiver of the rents, and I already anticipate the estate's being clear of debt to *me* in less than half the time I computed, from the extent of Godfrey's means; who I can easily divine will be anxious to be his uncle's sole creditor, and let the debts dissolve at his leisure. If any thing could make me despise life less, it would be the meeting with such characters as Mr. Godfrey's.

You congratulate me, Vernon, and I am sure sincerely, on having it in my power to relish a pleasure superior to those of the senses and all the commonly boasted enjoyments of the world. — I know not that I am in a state of mind fit to make the comparison : — the world and its enjoyments have palled upon my senses ; — they are gone ; — they are as if I never knew them, or if aught rest upon my recollection, it is very bitterness itself. — But I find the pleasure on which you congratulate me daily expanding in my heart : — it leaves me not ; — it combats the gloom of my solitude, it softens my pillow, it tranquillizes

my dreams : — I live upon it. — It is my greatest delight to act it over again. I enter the cottage ; I hear the sigh ; I look at the lovely entranced figure ; I try to waken her by striking the palms of her hands ; I carry her off in my arms ; I feel my hand pressed by her lips, and bathed with her tears ; I see her kneeling at her father's bed-side ; I see her on her father's bosom. — All this is sweet : — would I could stop here ; — but I go on and gather *their* feelings and wishes ; gratitude swelling with *pity*, and a wish that they could *respect* me : — and thus ends my feast with wormwood. But the bitterness of this soon passes off, and the wholesome ingredients pervade my mind, and nourish a kind of reverberated happiness which I never felt before.

You tell me it is evident, Miss Saville has made a very strong impression on me ; — yes, Vernon, a very strong one, — but of what kind ? Deeply internal ; — one that works with unaccountable keenness and perseverance at once upon my heart and upon my brain, in alternate fits of self-complacency and

self-abhorrence. — It is the impression of imagined innocence contrasting substantial * * * — let the word pass. I know indeed but little of her ; I believe her what I have heard, and what her features confirm ; but I contemplate her not for beauty of either mind or person ; yet has she been the means of shaking every fibre of my brain. — I see *her* as I describe, but it is *myself* I contemplate : — it is myself which the impression raises like a spectre to my view. — When will this end ? I am showing you the man you call your friend as he is : — he may get better ; — bear with him —. But matrimony ! And do you know me so little, Vernon ? And is it when love has ceased to have a power over this heart, that you propose matrimony to my hand ? She in this knows me better than you seem to do, and I am somewhat afraid that I gave her cause to think me rudely neglectful of her after my *exploit*, as you term it.

By the way, you see that it has been lately mentioned in the newspapers, approaching in some degree to the truth,

and with no indelicate remark. I hope the printers will have done here. — Little as I care for what may be said of me, I cannot bear that the name of this amiable, unsophisticated young creature should be coupled with mine. Let me therefore seriously request of you, never to hint to any one the idea of an attachment, and to drive it from your own mind. I knew not before that Miss Saville was a Roman Catholic, but I like her the better: — it is a very lady-like religion; — yet, if I had any thoughts of her, it would be to me an insurmountable impediment, for I never would consent to my wife's confessing her sins to any body but myself, as nobody else would have a right to forgive her.

I wish I could repay you for the pleasant parts of your letter in like coin: but you and I seem diverging in opposite directions: you grow daily more airy and pleasant, I hourly more heavy and gloomy. Bramblebear Hall, which in the summer I thought teeming with a harvest of ridicule and laughable comments on the virtues and felicity of

social regulations, presents me nothing but a mass of melancholy images and painful reflections. Bramblebear is no longer a merry, fretful pantaloon in my eyes, but a pitiable, jealous mortal, not the less to be pitied for having played the fool. — Lady Betty has lost her smile and soft voice, and is more deserving Veramore's opinion than my hasty one; for neither the prying of her husband, nor the deceitful beating of her pulse can keep her out of scrapes: — Her chief virtue is caution, or the *Spartan*. — Her good humour is gone, at least towards me: — she received me with frowns during the visit I paid on my arrival in the country; and verily, as Rufus swears, I believe she would make Bramblebear cut my throat, if your Spartan virtue did not forbid it: — all owing to my deficiency in a character, with the highest rank of which you have chosen to honour me, most undeservedly.

I cannot raise the laugh I promised you at my appointment to the sacred charge; — I am of a very different opi-

nion respecting the feeling it should excite. — Why there is this change I will not pretend to say, for I know not — but true it is, I am now as little of a lover as of a gallant ; and I think wives ought to be true to their husbands, at least to such as value them enough to be jealous of them, which is Bramblebear's case ; and I believe Mr. Timothy Craven is of my present opinion also ; for to his twist, his nasal dip, and his left-eyed wink, was also owing the change of administration at the Hall previous to my departure for the continent. — But I am not in a humour for painting, — nor is the subject worthy of the time.

One of the causes, which make me view Bramblebear Hall with a gloomy eye, is, that, however new in one sense Lady Betty may be to the Vortex, both she and her husband have whirled themselves into serious difficulties, and I know not which of the two is most to blame. He talks of going to a small place he has in Yorkshire ; — she will not hear a word of it ; and I would not swear that she would not sooner elope even with Veramore,

when he is free again, than bury her charms in the West-riding. I have ventured to advise her :— her answer — but what signifies her answer ? — It was a frown, and she must take her fate, as we all must. What an incurable disease of man's nature is it to be busying his puny efforts in resisting irresistible necessity ! Are we not tied by the leg ? Can advice avert Fate :— yet advise we must, forsooth ! Had she taken my advice when the administration of Bramblebear's honour was in my hands, she would have steered clear of the Vortex, and he might some how or other have been pulled out of it ; but, as you say of another, she was born for it. I am not sorry however, that the artful box of the ear ended in the expulsion of Master Veramore, who, in his account to you, has gilded the pill he was obliged to swallow. I have had the particulars both from Bramblebear and her separately : — he still doats and believes her all he can wish, consequently has no doubt of the sincerity of the fop's chastisement ; and so far was he from for-

swearing Bramblebear Hall, that Bramblebear swore that he would blow his brains out if ever he put his nose there again. This, they say, he received very coolly, and by no means showed a disposition to interpret it into a challenge, which Bramblebear asseverates he *intended* he should.

And now am I still exposed to the temptation of man's extraordinary disease of combating Fate ; and, though I know, and have just been stating, the folly of it, I am about the fruitless work again, — advice. Once more, my dear Vernon, take care what you are about : you know me too well to be offended with me. I know not whether Fancy is working up a piece of perfection in my brain ; but, since I have known and thought of Saville's daughter, I have felt an inexplicable desire to think better of the sex in general, and, inclined as I was from the first to exempt her cousin from those weaknesses which produce your system, I am now convinced. She is no Lady Standish, or Lady Betty ; nor are you, my friend, a Veramore. Even your

errors arise from principle, real or imaginary : you will not do a wrong ; but, if a wrong comes in your way, you can't help it. Now I own that I have no right to preach, and so I shall say nothing of the wrongs that may come in your way, but I will tell *you* a secret which you may believe or not, as you please — the world I know would not. — I never did, I never would destroy the happiness of a man : — there is but too little of it in the world. As far as my experience goes, the marriage state is not generally the state of happiness : — most people in that state come together without consideration, and soon find out that they are mismatched : — they do not much care for one another. — Not to make too long a sermon — if these cousins of this girl do not care for each other, I have done. If their happiness depend upon each other, and it is easily found out, I say — not for their sakes, for in that case you can do them no harm, but for the sake of the only man whom I call my friend, or who has a friendship for me ; for your own sake, Vernon, I say — I con-

jure you to desist tempting your own ruin. You yet stand fairly with the world; and, though I have bitterly learned to scorn it, I know that a fair character has its advantages, and these I would preserve for you. I repeat to you that the gallantry you emulate in me is a mistaken notion: the sources of my character are forgotten; they lie so deep, that even scandal is content with the surface and a general term, combined with mysterious hints of something terrible. This is the ground on which I stand; if you think it high, think also that it is a volcanic eminence. Vernon, preserve me your friendship; but aspire not to my fame or feelings.

I leave this purposely to avoid the Bramblebears. Do not fail to let me hear from you at Malvern Wells.

Ever your's,

F. DARRELL.

LETTER XXXI.

Mr. Vernon to Sir Francis Darrell.

Mount Vernon.

MY DEAR DARRELL,

I SHALL answer your's certainly as it merits ; but, as I have lately learned from my friend Rufus that there is a rule of concatenation in grammar, it would ill become me not to attend to the concatenation of subjects — and assuredly, at this juncture, the first place is due to that beauty, which blazed and dazzled in a ball-room without making any impression, and which, when it did impress, could only raise a spectre to view. — Shame upon you, Darrell — shame upon you, if you do *not* love. You may know but little of her ; but if ever time was unnecessary to love it is rendered so by this sleeping, dancing, weeping, dark-eyed, unaffected creature. — Nothing can be truer than the portrait you drew. — Time ! take time

to be in love with loveliness itself! You may well say I do not know you, if I am mistaken. I was myself in love with her in less than ten minutes. — What creates love? Beauty and good sense, and for argument's sake, virtue : — now, for beauty you have but to open your eyes ; for good sense to incline your ear for five minutes ; and in five minutes more you may judge of her virtue, if she is not a confirmed hypocrite. — Besides, the first and the last are variable qualities, and who would ever be in love if he were to anticipate the fading of either : — now good sense is invariable ; and, though it cannot protect beauty from time, it can, and does protect virtue. We will unpapacize her, and I will be her sponsor — for the three necessary qualities to create love. By heavens! if *I* had twenty thousand a year, I would not give *you* time to consider whether you should be in love or not : — I would lay it at her feet, while you were creeping from Clifton to Malvern, from Malvern to Grove-Park. She is the loveliest girl I ever saw, and, in spite of your prohibition to couple

your names, I must take upon me to warn you that such a woman cannot possibly remain long at her own disposal.

Since the arrival of the Godfreys at Manor House we have had repeated visits, and I see them every day. My sister would have given a general entertainment to the neighbourhood, but has delayed it at Mrs. Godfrey's request, that it should be postponed till their return from the excursion they propose, and which I find by your letter is to extend to Grove Park. Of my knowledge of this I gave no hint, as they have not thought proper to mention it; and I am, as far as concerns myself, content with the assurance of a return to spend their Christmas in Herefordshire: nor shall I make any effort to join the party, regarding it as a sacred expedition for the restoration of long-lost household gods. I shall think of you and envy your action—I should envy your happiness if those miserable hypocondres of yours would suffer you to have any.

Pray be easy as to my coupling your name with Miss Saville's to any body

but yourself; but neither my prudence, Darrell, nor her innocence, will silence those who delight in discovering or supposing such things. What gives me an apprehension that she has no thought of you, in the light of a lover, is most likely to create the suspicion of it among those who know the heart only as they know their piano-forte, by the touch, but have little idea of the science of the chords: with them the gratitude of an ordinary woman may pass for a common feeling, the vibration of a single note; but the gratitude of a beauty cannot but be a full diapason of the heart. I see in Miss Saville's frank fervour respecting her obligation a proof of her cherishing no other passion than gratitude — were it otherwise her expressions would be more guarded — but by many this will be attributed to a different cause; and I think it very likely that your names will be coupled, in spite of all that you can do, by the beings of the Vortex; and if they go no farther you must forgive them — it is their vocation.

Do not understand by what I have said that she speaks frequently of you, or

ever introduces the subject herself — I heard her once speak of you to my sister when she gave way to a delightful enthusiasm, calling you her preserver, and declaring that she daily prayed for you. Another time I had an opportunity in walking to single her for some time, and I mentioned you as my friend.

“Would to God,” said she, “that he were his own! It is a pity that he who can be a friend to others should be an enemy to himself.”

I said, that it was a fashion to speak ill of you; and that you merited far differently.

“He does not think proper,” said she, “to allow us to judge but from report, except in the instances with which you are acquainted. — The little experience, which my father and I have had of him, exalts him in my opinion almost above human nature, most assuredly far above its usual standard. I think of some of his actions with an admiration approaching to wonder, as well as with gratitude. As you are his friend,” continued she, “it must surely be in your power to in-

fluence his mind in some degree : — he is young — how might he yet make the world be-lie itself ! — how assume in every respect that superior character which the actions I am acquainted with show to belong to his nature !”

I smiled.

“ I see,” said she, “ that I speak too freely, and that I must take care not to be misunderstood even by his friend ; — but I am in the habit of speaking my thoughts without fear of mis-construction, and I will not discontinue the expression of my feelings. — It is particularly because I have learned that you are his intimate friend that I have not avoided this conversation. I feel an interest in Sir Francis Darrell’s welfare, far beyond the ordinary conceptions of gratitude, and the expression of which would probably only excite in you another smile ; but I assure you it is such a one as I would not hesitate to express to himself, if I were a little more acquainted with him, and such as I have already expressed to my father and my cousins. I do not

expect to see much more of *him* ; but you, Sir, I shall probably see often."

" I hope so," cried I, interrupting her. —

" I hope so too " replied she, " and I further hope that you will judge favourably of my freedom."

I said, " that I could not now mistake the genuine motives of her feelings."

" Upon that assurance," said she, " I will own to you, that I remember a part of Sir Francis Darrell's conversation, with very great pain. — At the very moment that he was doing an action on which Providence smiled, he said what showed but little veneration for the only source of comfort to a wounded spirit; His is evidently a wounded spirit. — I cannot take the liberty of advising him, nor have I ability to support my advice, if I did ; but you have : — tell him, and prove to him, that a wounded spirit is not to be borne, but by means which he appears to treat with contempt ; — and let not your friend perish from being too proud to stoop, and taste of the renovating stream running by him."

I was beginning some protestation of esteem; but Mrs. Godfrey and Mrs. Dartford of the Priory came up, and to my infinite regret put an end to a conversation, which I wished to have pursued, and which I will endeavour to renew before the party set out. It was rather solemn, but unaffected; and sprung from her heart, — no nauseous cant like the *verily* of Rufus. There was something like love in it, but not earthly love. I watched her eyes, and not the slightest trace of it could I detect in them — no, she believes in the immortality of the soul, and to save your's is the object of that passion, which I say is not an earthly one. Now, Darrell, your hour is come for studying your Bible: at all events take it off its shelf, and let it be seen, freed of dust, upon your table. Write something on the margin here and there, to look like short-hand notes: — be devout to be beloved.

Half inclined to treat as usual the subject ludicrously, I find my pen halting, and ridicule tardy in its inspiration. But I really experience the force

of your observation ; the manner of this young lady commands respect :— her seriousness is not tarnished with outward demonstrations ; her eyes do not dart, nor her cheeks transfuse religion, and her phraseology is good modern English, not composed of obsolete language, which, dangerous to all subjects, is fatal to pious ones. Her thoughts, guided by her heart, are sent directly to her lips, in the usual natural language of conversation, and, if she had talked to me of her Lady of Loretto, I could not have laughed at her. Had she been a female Rufus, I should by this time have filled my paper with a *learned* comment on the Song of Solomon, and on the nature of the attachment of the mother of the said king of Israel.

You know Mrs. Dartford, an elegant and amiable woman, in the middle stage of life, who lost her husband a few years ago. The family, an ancient one, are Roman Catholics. They have long been upon an intimate footing with ours. She favours me with a degree of confidence of which I ought to be proud, for she is a sensible and well-instructed woman, and

no bigot. I am going to give you an instance of her confidence to the point, nor do I deem it a breach of it, as the subject is not confined to me, and is already partly talked of. John Dartford, her son, was a fine youth when his father died, and has lately come into the possession of a very considerable property in this county. With an amiable and lively disposition, he is the most inconstant of mortals in his pursuits, which has not given his talents fair play. His studies varied from one branch of learning to another; they were earnest for the time, but soon discontinued; he has, of course, some general information, but is not *approfondi* in any. Two years ago, books were every thing; now, men and manners are the living pages of knowledge; accordingly he is reading his new pages in foreign countries, and, under the head of men and manners, he includes the interesting lecture of eyes, be they brown or be they blue. He is in love; but it is no novel passion to him, and in this his character preserves its *consistency*. Before he was well turned sixteen, he

rode thirty miles to dance with a pretty girl, who, he said, was matchless in beauty, and so sensible! His second ride fatigued him; and meeting in the way, at a friend's, with a *matchless and so sensible* young widow, the thirty-mile beauty was eclipsed, and for a month Dartford entertained his mother with the irresistible charms of an interesting youthful widowhood fifteen miles nearer home. His mother laughed him out of this irresistible enchantment; but she was secretly aided by the dark eyes of a lovely French emigrée, among whose friends a still lovelier emigrée made her appearance, and, there being no priority-law in love before marriage, took the place of her friend. All these passions were sentimental; but the most sentimental was to come, a violent but virtuous passion for a married woman. — Maids, widows, emigrées were lost in the brightness and pure flame of a love worthy the pen of the Geneva philosopher. The husband becomes uneasy, and away flies the virtuous lover (who, I must observe *en passant*, moves at a respect-

able distance out of the Vortex) to breathe the air erst inhaled by the pure lungs of Rousseau's *Two Lovers*, whose letters he avowedly published for the destruction of young ladies.

In that hot-bed of spurious sentiment, auspicious to Erotic pranks, Dartford was fated to meet a young lady, who, according to him, "adds to an uncommon share of beauty an equally uncommon share of good sense;" and who, of course, dispelled the enchantment of Jean Jacques, and sentimental adultery, a most heterogeneous monster, and unknown even in the Vortex. But the new enchantress—who is she? You have seen her; I send you her picture drawn by a masterly pencil; can you tell me who she is? "Her eye is dark, but it is more soft and expressive than brilliant; it indicates soul rather than vivacity: a deep-brown wave of unequal curls seems to move across her forehead; her cheeks glow with red, but on a complexion suited to her eye, clear but not fair; her neck rises from her bust with a distinguishing elegance; her stature above the common height;

her hands and feet small, and her arms formed to complete the grace that attends every movement of her person." Yes, you recognise the original, — 'tis the wood-nymph, 'tis Saville's daughter.

He took *no time* to consider whether she was to be loved or not, proposed himself on the banks of the lake of Geneva, where he abandons Jean Jaques, and flies to Florence, whence he writes to Mrs. Dartford, conjuring her in the strongest terms, to be his advocate in love. Now to the point, my dear Darrell: — Mrs. Dartford is, perhaps, the more anxious of the two to make Miss Saville her daughter-in-law; for, in her eyes, to her acknowledged charms there are two most important additional ones: — they are of the same church, and such a marriage would put an end to all the anxiety she suffers lest her son, in the unregulated passions that succeed one another in an ardent and too susceptible heart, should inconsiderately connect himself with a person whom she could not esteem. "Miss Saville was every thing she could wish. Her fortune was indeed ma-

derate, and dependent on a contingency which could not be thought of; but Dartford wanted not fortune, and Miss Saville's connections were exactly what her own feelings would lead her to seek."

This friendly communication was avowedly made, for the purpose of engaging me to favour the progress of the affair, by all the occasional influence I could use with my friends of Manor House, and in my acquaintance with Mr. and Miss Saville. And now, Darrell, without coupling your names, I think it the part of friendship to give you this intelligence, and I think you owe me, in return, the confidence of imparting candidly, whether the matter is so indifferent to you, as to allow my furthering Mrs. Dartford's views without injuring your's.

In the course of the conversation with her I could not help asking her, if she thought my own heart was made of stone.

"No," replied she, "but I think you too prudent to despise fortune, and too much a man of the world to put any faith in rural felicity."

I thanked her ironically for her good opinion. Prudence is, in fact, the countersign in our age; but I sometimes think that young men give a very great latitude of signification to the word *Prudence*. For instance, if I were ever so much inclined to marry, prudence hints, that my wife has a right to an establishment not very inferior to my brother's; *ergo* I cannot marry a woman, who does not bring with her a fortune equal or superior to my own. Here you see the *ergo* proceeds on its being taken for granted, that the object is a large establishment; there is no question as to happiness. Secure the establishment; trust for the happiness. Is it extraordinary that the Vortex should be crowded? But, independent of any consideration, I am not inclined to marry; I am not tired of my liberty, and I adore — not Dartford's idol, so Darrell may be easy.

I am very sorry to hear that you have lost your relish for Bramblebear Hall. The master of it is one of those men whom no one pities, and it is very befitting that his wife should enter the Vor-

tex. But how is this Darrell? How comes this change of tone? It is not very long ago that you professed to find your heart gone, when other fortunate men began to recover their's. Yet here is Lady Betty — but I will be merciful: it is not by fretting wounds, that we can cure them. Let her go, — but pray let not your own hold on the few sweets in your power go too. However deep lies the secret of your failings, they cannot be such as to amass so thick a gloom as your diseased imagination sees. Be assured you have the fashionable complaint — *the liver*, — and there are proper remedies for it, *sunt certa piacula*, and those you must take.

La Belle! There you have me again, — and you have a right to advise me; and if you have a doubt, I give it you. The consideration of your advice, and thanks for it, you may depend upon from me, whatever Fate may intend me. I confess I think she fairly rivals her cousin in beauty, nor is the rivalry less that her smile is more equivocal.

I thanked her ironically for Rufus's opinion. Prudence is in him, in tersign in our age, a vast mass of think that young people managed to latitude of signification. I have written dence. For instance, cannot afford him much inclined, shall have the whole that my wife will see that he has ment not grammar, and makes ergo I call a hasty pen sins against not bring profound and pious argu- perior between the wife and the maiden, ergo I see you; he is an arrant rogue, grant me one too. I must expose him; but of all dissimulation, pious hypocrisy is the most abominable; — methinks it is bold enough to sin in defiance of God; but to make him an ally in sin,—if there is any damnation, it must be for that. Mark the fellow's ecstasy at the sight of the pretty little feet, the neatly turned ankle, and the silk stocking.

Let me see: — I am to direct this to the Malvern Spa; and why to the Malvern Spa? What are you going there

have not surely divined, that
and Godfreys are going
e the only man I cannot
such a manoeuvre; for, I
ou would sooner have gone
and's End, had you known it.
"if Chance will," &c.

Ever your's,

L. VERNON.

And now a sentence or two for Rufus. I have had another letter from him, in consequence of the congregated mass of misfortunes which he has managed to owe to the Venus; but I have written you a long letter, and cannot afford him much time, so you shall have the whole of his letter. You will see that he has not forgotten his grammar, and makes apologies when a hasty pen sins against a rule. His profound and pious argument, between the wife and the maiden, will amuse you; he is an arrant rogue, and does not hide it from me because he thinks me one too. I must expose him; — of all dissimulation, pious hypocrisy is the most abominable; — methinks it is bold enough to sin in defiance of God; but to make him an ally in sin, — if there is any damnation, it must be for that. Mark the fellow's ecstasy at the sight of the pretty little feet, the neatly turned ankle, and the silk stocking.

Let me see: — I am to direct this to the Malvern Spa; and why to the Malvern Spa? What are you going there

for? You have not surely divined, that the Savilles and Godfreys are going there? You are the only man I cannot suspect of such a manœuvre; for, I believe you would sooner have gone to the Land's End, had you known it. Well, "if Chance will," &c.

Ever your's,

L. VERNON.

"

LETTER XXXII.

Rufus Palmer, Esq. to Mr. Vernon.

Hants Cottage.

DEAR MR. VERNON,

WHAT a congregation of unforeseen troubles have befallen me! Thus it is ever, as some author observes; extremes are sure to meet. I was too happy, Mr. Vernon, and nothing seemed to cloud the future prospect of my happiness for the remainder of the autumn. — The genii of that happiness are suddenly fled, and not only fled, but are gone off in displeasure with your friend. Truly did I say, in a former letter, that Venus caused me much evil; yet the flannel petticoat occasioned little more than a flea-bite, in comparison with the gnawing at my heart, which my imprudence respecting her has now created. Would to Heaven I had given a sober ear to

the friendly hints of Mr. Hamilton. "There are many things," said he, "that may be fairly done, which may not be spoken;" *honeste factu, turpe dictu*, the purest eye may admire the works of Art, and early habit may eradicate indelicate associations from the mind; but it is hardly allowable to be eloquent on subjects which moral customs have proscribed. I am, as you see, a devotee to Taste, yet I admire the preference given by the inhabitants of Cos, who, full of admiration of the workmanship displayed by the Prince of Sculptors on his far-famed Venus, nevertheless chose for their temple one of inferior excellence by the same master, for the decency of its drapery, though either was at their option.

This must have been a very sensible remark of Mr. H.'s at the time; but I was so full of the superiority of taste, particularly Italian taste, over the prejudices of education, particularly English education, that I never once thought it applicable to my intention of consulting Miss S. and Mrs. G. — though perhaps I should have said Mrs. G. and Miss S. — The Italian education of

the former guided me in the concatenation, and my blind devotion to the classical arrangement of Hants Cottage, guided me in an unlucky moment to Woodlee, where by the bye there is no want of marble in all the Heathen shapes of Greek and Roman divinities, not to say Indian slaves with bare arms and shoulders, holding lamps in the hall, and on the staircase. Mr. Godfrey, you know is a bit of a Virtuoso ; — there is a very fine naked foot on the chimney-piece in his study.

As I went in, Miss S. happened to be crossing the hall, and had her foot on the step of the staircase. — After the usual salutation, I looked with some archness on the bronze damsel that presented her lamp, and said, “shoulders rather exposed?” — This, I thought a good way of breaking the ice ; — she smiled : — Oh ! such a smile, Vernon ! —

“ Her colour,” said she, “ tells us her country. We must allow some airiness to the ladies of a hot climate.”

This was a natural observation, and emboldened me.

“ You,” said I, “ have just come from a warm climate,—is such airiness allowed to the ladies there ?”

“ If you mean the Italians,” replied she, “ I can assure you that the women are particularly attentive to decorum in their dress.” —

“ But their statues ?” said I.

“ Their statues !” cried she, laughing as divinely as she had smiled before, — “ I believe *their* decorum does not depend upon themselves, but upon the artist who presides at their toilet.” —

“ Some of them,” said I, “ have no toilet at all.”

This was to hear what she would say : and what do you think she did say ? She neither smiled nor laughed this time, nor made the slightest alteration in her countenance, and only said :

“ You will find Mrs. Godfrey in the parlour :” and up stairs she went.

I did not know what to think ; but I never saw prettier little feet in my life, or a sweeter turned ankle in a silk stocking : — these, though the last, or lowest, are not the least distinctions of

beauty, and I can now say, from my own observation, that Miss S. is beautiful from head to foot.

Mrs. G. was playing with little Caroline, and received me with her usual graciousness. Some time passing without my finding an apt introduction for the enquiry I purposely came for, I was puzzling my brains how to begin, when Mrs. G. herself led to it, by asking me how the improvements at Hants Cottage went on. —

“Mr. Hamilton is a man of known taste,” said she.

“He has dissuaded me,” I said, “from cutting down the hazels at the end of the garden, which would open the grove to the admiration of the public.” —

“What’s his objection?” said she. —

“There,” replied I, “I have some suspicion of his taste, and he will not consent to my carrying my friends to the spot till the workmen have left that part of the grounds. I wanted your opinion upon the statue which I have placed in the grove, and the execution

of which is said to be so beautiful: I think it a pity to keep a skreen perpetually before it, behind it I mean, though 'pon my word I don't know which is the properest expression as it stands."

I said this to see if she had any knowledge of the statue. I thought by her smile she had; then, thinks I, I need not mince the matter; yet how to describe was the difficulty, so I determined to do it without speaking, taking Hamilton's hint of *turpe dictu, honeste factu*, and having had an exact drawing of it made on a card, I took it out of my pocket-book, saying, "my dear Mrs. G. you are an amateur I know; look at that, and tell me if the hazels shall be cut down."

She cast her eye on the card, and, immediately raising it, fixed it on me so long without speaking, that I felt the blood come into my face; but seeing no anger in her's, I said, "I protest I feel a little aukward: — on which she smiled with her usual benignity of countenance, and replied: — "So you ought; — and I would have you consult your

real friends before you cut down your hazels.”

She said nothing more on the subject, but talked of the intended journey to Manor House, which has now taken place. Now I leave you to judge, — Miss S. I did not see again that day, and only once after in company; but I think it is clear she has not the prejudices of cold climates, yet abides by the *turpe dictu*; she of course would be on your side. But is it not as decidedly clear that Mrs. G. is as much imbued with northern prejudices in favour of flannel, as her country-woman Martha, and that she thinks *factu* as *turpe* as *dictu*? Alas! I feel that by the mismanagement of this saying of Hamilton's I have offended both the ladies, though, on an average, Miss S. less by one half than Mrs. G., according to their respective climates. Make use I beseech you of the advantage you now have of being near them to reinstate me completely in their favour: — How I envy you!

Mr. Godfrey did not ask me down. —

That was a nice room I slept in at Mount-Vernon. — That is a superb hunter of my Lord's ; I wonder if I shall ever mount him again ? I think not — I would rather wing a partridge, or bring down a cock pheasant — Pheasant shooting is just begun I think, isn't it ? But before I suffer my thoughts to turn on the pleasure of seeing Lady Bab mount her favourite *Miss Dash*, and of riding over soberly with you on a couple of my Lord's hacks to Manor House — keep it in mind though. — I must finish my letter with the rest of the miseries which taste has brought about my ears like a nest of wasps.

When I returned from Woodlee that unfortunate morning, whom should I find at Hants Cottage but my uncle Ezekiel, with my cousins Pyrrhus and Pamela, a man eminent in his line, and a good citizen of London, but rather deficient in the article of taste. He came, he said, to give me his honest opinion on my goings on, and had taken the same opportunity to bring his boy and girl to see their cousins.

“Why, Rufus,” said he, “I heard that you had disinherited your father’s property of all its adornments, that you had thrown all his stone figures down, and were *transmogrifying* the very ground itself; and I find ’tis but too true, for I have been all about the premises, and verily I do not know them again. And did ever I think that I should behold such profane sights as have shamed my eyes on the fair and wealthy estate of my dear brother James? — And had your devout mother, the dear relict of James, been still alive, would she have endured the toleration of all these *transmogrifications* and outlandish doings? — It would have killed her, Sir; and what is the difference as to you, that you do it after her death? — Poor Dolly! She is gone, but what’s that to you? Your conscience ought to smite you all one, for the deed is the same, only some other cause of her death happened to come first.”

I assure you, my friend, though this be city eloquence, and not such as I have been used to, I found it difficult to an-

swer ; but my sister's kindness to Pamela and my sister Kitty's arguments to Pyrrhus at length softened uncle Zieke, on my promising to take his remonstrances into consideration ; still he would not be prevailed upon to stay longer than the remainder of the day at Hants Cottage in its present state, and early next morning he set off for London with my cousins. But the worst part was, that Martha, who has grown sullen, stood by to hear my uncle's oration, and freely echoes it about the house. My sister Kitty wants me to turn her away, and wonders I allow her to take such a liberty ; but she is a remarkable good cook, and as Kitty knows that, she thinks it a very good reason not to part with her. Kitty says a good deal against Mrs. G.'s squeamishness ; but verily, unless you assist me to support the new introduction of true taste at Hants Cottage, I shall wish I had never known any thing of it, in spite of my conviction of your judgment.

Compliments from Kitty and Miss Palmer. Pray write to me soon—tell

me every thing about Mrs. G. and Miss S., and whether Mount-Vernon is full of company or not, and believe me,

Dear Vernon,

Most truly your's,

RUFUS PALMER,

LETTER XXXIII.

Angelica Pisani to Augusta.

DOUBTFUL of your stay in Paris, my dearest Augusta, I resolved to direct this to your English address, but not to dispatch it till I heard again from you respecting the time of your remaining in the French capital. I have now received your second letter, and shall accordingly adhere to my resolution. You will see, my dear sister, by what I have written in my letter to Paris*, how our minds continue to accord. — Some parts of that letter might be imagined almost a transcript of parts of yours. — No wonder; our manner of thinking, and the subjects of our thoughts having been the same all our lives; no wonder either that our love should be so great and reciprocal. But I imagine, and hope too, Augusta, that I suffer most in this separation; I imagine it, because a journey and novelty give a certain degree of relief to the feelings —

* This letter is missing.

I remain amidst the objects that perpetually recall you to my mind, and I seek for you to give them their proper look ; I pine for you to enable me to enjoy them. Sad, therefore, as was your heart, judge how doubly sad was mine. Indeed such was the effect of the loss of your company on my spirits, that my father and mother more than once expressed a wish that they had consented to my accompanying you to England, and I was ungrateful enough to them to wish it in secret too, for some time. — You would not love me, Augusta, nor should I deserve it, could my heart have remained shut to the fond appeals of their affection. To show them how much it was returned, I resolved to recover my cheerfulness, and I effected it sufficiently to make them easy. — Yet I still find you wanting to my relish of life, and if you do not return next year to Signa, I must prevail upon my father to realize his promise of carrying me to bring you back.

Meanwhile console me by your letters ; they are cordials to my heart. — It has been said that happy lovers, to enjoy their passion the more, should make occasions of

absence for the sake of the delight which flows from corresponding. I should not in our friendship have readily consented to making the occasion, but, being made, I acknowledge that the delight is great. — Write then, my dearest Augusta ; — show me all that passes at your heart, and tell me all the events in which you are interested. — Dearly, most dearly, do I love you — so dearly, that could we unite our lot through life, I should prefer it to every other, happy in the thought of our living and dying together.

Although I speak thus for myself, think not, Augusta, that I would have you entertain the thought — no ; you must — but what is then to become of me ? I cannot bear the thought ; — yet it must be — Augusta will be — is already surrounded with lovers, and must — oh ! yes, she must choose one of them for a partner through life. — The thought raises a cloud before my prospect. — If the spring should see Augusta a wife, will Augusta's husband bring her to Signa ? Will Angelica occupy the same portion of her heart ? The latter, yes : but not the former. —

What then? Shall your Angelica choose an English husband, and adopt that England of which we have so often talked, and talked with pride and with delight? — For you taught me to be proud of it as your country, and as the source whence so much good had flowed to all the world. Well then, when I find one answering your idea, which is mine, I will marry, but certainly not before, and then, my dear Augusta shall retain her full portion of my heart.

How will you be surprised, Augusta, to hear that your Paris letter has arrived in time to prevent my accepting your Geneva lover! You laugh, do you? Take care how you provoke me, or I shall make you repent it, by arriving at your door — Mrs. Dartford. I hardly know how to tell it you seriously; but seriously I am in full possession of the heart of your Lake lover, and his hand is at my disposal. — And what will you say, if I tell you that I think him an agreeable youth? I assure you, not only I, but my father and mother, and all your friends here are pleased with him. He was introduced to us by Lady * *.

He is lively, romantically studious of the literature and arts of our country, and his face and person are by no means bad. I am under great obligation to him for the many hours he has rendered pleasant by talking to me of you.

At first I had no doubt that he had lost his heart to you, from the rapturous manner in which he expressed himself—but he never actually made the acknowledgment.—If he had I know not how he would have managed to declare himself my lover.—To my father he has said nothing on the subject; probably because I have treated his passion with the lightness it merits. After spending a fortnight at Florence, devoted *in proper portions* to painting, sculpture, poetry, and love; the latter, at least the admiring part of it, subdivided among Alfieri, Dante, Tasso, and Angelica Pisani, he proceeded on his travels, declaring his impatience to have them over, that he might return to Florence with his mother's approbation of his love, and propose himself formally to my father.—At this I laughed, and told him he had committed

a folly in distressing his mother with his travelling *amourettes* ; and I did not even say that I should be glad to see him back, though I could have said it very sincerely, had it not been for the interpretation he would have given to the expression ; and, certainly, I did not mean to give him the encouragement it would have implied. We have heard nothing of him since his departure, and now that your letter has given me an insight into his character, I imagine we shall see no more of him.

It is a great pity, my dear Augusta, that this really amiable young man should have his natural and acquired qualities tarnished by so variable and frivolous a disposition in a point of the most serious importance in life. What woman of common reflection would admit a thought of bestowing her hand upon him ? The friends of such a character are truly to be pitied : — they cannot but love him, but must live in dread of his plunging them into misery by a capricious disposal of himself. I wish he were in England again, and that his friends would have

keepers appointed for him till his understanding were sufficiently settled to be trusted to itself. Or, what would my dear Augusta think of undertaking it herself? If constancy can possibly be instilled into his heart, you are the person to do it. — Virtues, abilities, family, and fortune are in his favour, to say nothing more of his person than I have already; and unsteadiness of mind is the weight against him. You are, perhaps, his first love too; and I assure you he talked, and, I believe, thought more of you than of me. When you are better acquainted with his family, and come to know more of him, you may perhaps not be disinclined to think the fixing him a pious work. One great improvement in his favour I must not omit telling you; — he is recovered from the contagious eloquence of Rousseau, and execrates him. He never once compared you to *Julie*, and indeed I should have been very angry if he had. Your picture of him is admirably like.

The touches you have given to another portrait are still more exquisite, but of

the resemblance I cannot judge. The features, taken separately, are fine ; they are formed for the expression of greatness, but it may be greatness of different natures ; and the emotions you have pourtrayed, manifest an equivocal, or rather a two-fold character. This seems proved, on the one hand by your own experience, and on the other by the account of your friends. Sir Francis Darrell's generosity, relative to the restoration of your father's estate, ranks him high indeed on the scale of beneficence ; but I fear, from your remarks on the dark indications of his countenance, and from the reports in England, that you are but too accurate in suspecting him of some unaccountable depravity or unrepented crime. No, my dear Augusta, your language is not that of an enamoured damsel : — it is the language of candour. It would be injustice not to admire his virtue, and affectation not to admire a fine form ; but neither the one nor the other will ensnare such a heart as your's. Convinced of this, I cannot but hope that nothing will be found so objectionable in

him as to prevent my dear Mr. Saville from once more making himself master of his dear Grove Park. — But as I write this, a painful apprehension has crossed my imagination. — Ah! Augusta, it will weaken my hope of your speedy return to Signa; — but you must promise not to let it keep you in England altogether. — My beloved father and mother, who study my happiness as their own, take a pleasure in talking of our having a *home* in both countries: — then Grove Park and Signa shall not be hostile names; — we will sometimes live in the one, sometimes in the other.

I cannot help being sorry too that Grove Park is so near to Belmont Lodge; but from what you have said of him, I do not think, let his vices be what they may, that Sir Francis Darrell is likely to molest the inhabitants of Grove Park. — I should suspect that, were both your father and you ever so much inclined to make him intimate there, you would not succeed. I imagine that you have now been long enough in England to determine the affair, and I am looking

with encreasing impatience for my first English letter ; but I will not suffer my expectation to keep this of mine open to tell you I have received it. — A gentleman is going from the Ambassador's this week who has promised me to take charge of it.

In my former letter I gave you an account of all our friends, and told you that they continued to love you. — On this subject I have nothing new to say, except that Olivastro is returned from Vienna. — He is but just arrived, and has a commission of some kind from the Court to execute at Florence ; — his attendance proves to have been advantageous to him. He is not at all altered in his temper ; its violence seems less noisy, but more settled. — He has fought a duel : — in a passionate moment he used some harsh expressions against the English, which occasioned his being challenged : — he received a wound which, though not dangerous, became troublesome, and I understand is still open. I have seen him ; — he is civil to me, but that's all. He never mentioned you or

your father, nor did he to his own family express any surprise at your departure, which it was natural to suppose he would, though he had been told of it when it took place. The Contessa is unhappy about him, and tells my dear mother that she now wishes you had listened to him, for he persists in swearing that he never will give you up, and is determined, when he has settled some affairs here, to take a journey to England. He knows nothing of your progress, or where you are; but there is some confused story at the Ambassador's, taken from a newspaper, which has affected him very much. I cannot imagine how your name can have got into a newspaper, particularly an English one, as you can be but just arrived there: — but I am anxious to see what it is they say, and have begged the gentleman, who is to take this letter, to bring me the particular paper: — he promised it yesterday, but has not yet performed his promise.

Yes, my dear Augusta, I agree with you, that it is a misfortune to be obliged to reject the offers of men:

but when they assume the power of conquering by perseverance, they deserve our resentment instead of our sympathy, and it is no longer a misfortune. The Count is a madman, and ought to be confined instead of being pitied. Should he be mad enough to proceed to England, I do think that Mr. Saville and your friends would do right not to receive him. His family could not be hurt at it. My father and mother think in this as I do; — so does our dear Abate Cevello, whose affection for you is truly paternal,

* * * * *

Tell me how I shall send you my laugh on paper — I have seen the Journal. The polite caution of our English friends at Florence has been the cause of my not seeing it before; and at last the newspaper was put confidentially into my father's hands, that he might use his judgment in showing it to me or not as he pleased. The first effect it had on him was to make him laugh; the second to shock him, on reflecting that your name was treated so lightly. The reverse was the case with

me, I was shocked at first, and then I laughed. But though I can read the assertion of your having eloped with Sir Francis Darrell, as ridiculous, I cannot help thinking there must be something extremely malignant in the disposition of the writers of such paragraphs, whether founded on truth or not; for in either case the feelings of innocent persons must be put to the torture — nay, the truth of a child's crime but renders the publication of it the more acute to a parent. We have not been unaccustomed to the perusal of English papers, and know that paragraphs of this kind are often inserted to be contradicted, and we say Augusta must be content to bear her portion of the splashing raised by the rapidity of the wheels of a free press. She will easily brush it off — this is her own doctrine. — What can possibly have given rise to such a report? Can it be pure invention? — Your account of Sir Francis Darrell makes it the most unlikely thing in the world. You will perhaps tell me that having called upon your father, and looked at you in a ball-room, are quite sufficient grounds —

This I will take for granted, for conjecture is in vain, and I will put my letter up unclosed till the last, with the hope of being able to tell you that I have again heard from you; and I own, that this paragraph has not made me less anxious for the arrival of your next letter.

* * * * *

Your dear letter from Woodlee is arrived. — It renders you dearer to my heart than ever, if that be possible. I am all agitation, my dear Augusta, and know not what to say first. As I read, I began with thanking God for your safety, and my first prayer was that he would bless your deliverer.

I cannot write : — I have laid down and taken up my pen, I know not how many times, but I must conclude my letter to-night, for Colonel —— leaves Florence to-morrow, and has been here to announce his departure. — Still my brain is all confusion — but I will write.

My first prayer was a blessing on your deliverer — but from whom did he de-

liver you ? And how came he to find you in a distant wood ? My reason is bewildered — I know not what to think.

No, it could not be he : — all the subsequent part of his conduct proves that it could not be he ; — his former action too proves it could not ; — the picture you have drawn, mixed as it is, proves it could not, and my blessing shall not be recalled : — my daily prayers shall be offered up with your's for his conversion and salvation, for the more I examine your account of him, the more am I induced to think with you that his soul was originally formed for a noble life, and a glorious immortality.

But while I readily do this zealous justice to Sir Francis Darrell, the unanswered question returns, Who is the villain ? It cannot, I am sure, be either of the two on whom alone your suspicion turns. What I have said of Mr. Dartford in this letter will convince you that it could not be he, though I think his very appearance enough to remove all doubt of him.

Neither can it be Olivastro — there are indeed strong reasons for attaching

suspicion to him — but those are completely overturned by undeniable circumstances. He was undoubtedly at Vienna at the time of the outrage, and confined in consequence of the wound he received in the duel he had just had with an English officer there. The Contessa received letters from his friend, informing her of his doing well, and as soon as he could move he lost no time in returning to Florence, in consequence of the commission with which he was entrusted. My father says it is impossible it could be he. The grounds of your reasoning are good, but incontestible facts show the contrary, and therefore you are right in not pronouncing the opinion. It is not only he, but the amiable Contessa and his sisters that would suffer severely if such a report were to go abroad. Your having taken nothing at Gaza's house exempts Mariana from suspicion: — her husband I never much liked; — we know him to have been a smuggler, and I have very little doubt of smuggling being his present mode of making money, which is his god. But I do not think these people concerned in

it, though there is a circumstance which has escaped you that might have some weight against them, if every thing else was not so positively in their favour, and that is, that Mariana was Olivastro's nurse, and distractedly fond of him. — It is very clear, however, that it was not of her you took whatever it was that made you sleep ; and this is the most unaccountable part of all : — but it is in vain to think — though from the reputation of the French police, I expect to hear of its being discovered. I need not tell you, my dear Augusta, how much we have all rejoiced in your safety ; but my father, my mother, and my aunt, desire me to repeat their love to you on the occasion.

And now let me turn to the other parts of your dear letter. I congratulate you on being under the same roof with your cousins. I warmly participate your happiness, and my imagination helps me to join with you in fondling your little Caroline. I see you with her on your knee, sitting between Mr. and Mrs. Godfrey, by whom sits your father ; and I reflect how naturally such a situation suggests

the grateful and happy reflections with which you begin your letter. Yes, happiness was intended for all, but all do not know how or where to seek it. A pure mind, Augusta, creates its paradise every where, and sheds its bright rays around wherever it goes. — This is the reason *you* view all objects in so fair a light. Love finds its proper habitation, and turns tranquil content to fervid happiness. I do not envy you, though you have found a Caroline Godfrey, and I have lost an Augusta : — no, not lost, I will not say lost, for she still is mine, though far away. I will not envy, I will share your friendship in imagination, and feast myself with hopes of realising it. To aid my fancy, send me pictures of your group, and describe the places you chiefly delight in, with a pen that may be compared to the pencil of Teniers.

As I re-peruse your letter, I am led to contemplate the character of Sir Francis Darrell, and the feelings which you express towards him. — In this late action the greatness of his soul leaves all report

and all the peculiarities of his manner at such a distance, that they are out of sight, and I view his virtues alone with wonder and delight. In doing good, neither fortune nor life is to him of the slightest consideration : — he exposes his life, or he relinquishes an estate with the calmness of a hero, and the indifference of a saint. What is real grandeur but this ? It may not be the grandeur of the senses, the end of human ambition. It is celestial grandeur, — it is Christian grandeur. Who can contemplate it without admiration, — who can feel it without love ? Not your Angelica ; she is already all admiration and love, and her heart is so full, that, were he at this moment by her side, she too would press his hand to her lips and let the tear now standing in her eye fall upon it. If such are my feelings, what must be yours ? What ought they not to be ? There are none of which my dear Augusta is capable that will not arise naturally in her heart, and to me she will acknowledge them, — to me who am her second self, and conscious of them even before they are imparted.

As I said before I received your letter, I am *conscious* that your heart is not to be ensnared by solitary actions, however brilliant, and that your principle, in respect to a step on which the future course of life depends, is not to be shaken. It is clear to me, however, that Sir Francis Darrell's virtues, (for I can talk only of them) are not those irregular and chance effusions, which are laudable in themselves, though from being accidental effects of casual incitements they leave no glory on the person : — they are not casually prompted ; his soul is alive to the occasion, and no consideration can avert its essential activity. — Nature in him is good, and you judge truly, I am certain, in thinking his errors, his crimes, — whatever they be which we have yet to hear of, — to be the effects of casual influences, and that they cannot have so far depraved such a soul, as not to leave a hope of recovering it. I like to judge from what I know, not from what I am to know ; and in this spirit I have formed my judgment of Sir Francis Darrell ; nor have I left out what I do know that

displeases me in your account of him. These alter not my opinion, nor is the uncertainty of what I have to know a reason for suspending the judgment I have expressed—which is not that Sir Francis Darrell is a good man, but that his nature is good and not irrecoverably depraved—that shutting the door against his return to the noble paths which his soul was formed to dignify is the weak policy of doubtful virtue,—and that the wise and the charitable, and self-defended virtue should resolve to keep it open. It should be kept open,—not to vice, I cannot mean that,—but to repentance.—To repentance, the narrow gate of Heaven mysteriously widens its portals, and stands perpetually open. Oh! how I wish with you, that he may find it! Alas! it is too clear from his conversation that day that he is not even in search of it. Oh! that we could direct him;—but if that glory is not reserved for us, I will hope and believe that it is reserved for some inspired pastor to whose disinterested eloquence he may willingly attend.

You see, my dearest Augusta, how my feelings correspond with your's ; my affection for you places me completely in your situation, and I have gone through every thing with you. I am consequently more anxious for your next letters. I know they will not be delayed longer than necessary, and I trust they will bring me tidings of an agreeable nature respecting Grove Park. The events subsequent to your former letter have made some change in the point of delicacy. The transfer of Grove Park is an obligation so inferior to that which cannot be declined, that I think Mr. Saville will have to overcome no objection ; and as for the nearness of Sir Francis Darrell's seat, it appears more and more that he does not intend to inflict his society upon your father, and that you have made no dangerous impression upon him ; — at both of which I own my wonder, but particularly at the last. There must be, as you say, something rankling at his heart which steels it against its natural emotions ; otherwise he could not have seen you as he has, served you as he has,

without completely yielding it to you. It is, however, very fortunate for you, for, although gratitude is no ground for claiming a return of love, it would have been a most painful trial. Such love as he deserves I think you already give unsolicited,—more you could not, and would not give, were he even free from all taint, when you consider him as avowedly, if not the derider, the denier of all religion. If Love demands a congeniality of sentiment on earthly subjects, can it be less essential on heavenly ones? Of what lasting value can that affection be which confesses itself limited to a few years? Without the hope of immortality, without the hope of salvation, love and friendship would lose their smiles; life would be a melancholy journey,—hope of every kind would be short,—fear would be eternal. Oh, how different are our views of existence! Sorrow is soothed, happiness is doubled; part we must, but we part, Augusta, as you and I did when you left Signa, to meet again, to continue to love. The pang will hardly be greater than what we felt; the re-union will infinitely

exceed what it will be on earth, mingling more completely in the love of God, of our Saviour, and of our sainted friends.

Our dear Abate Cevello has just left me. I believe he inspired the last sentence by his conversation. He loves you, and bids me tell you so, and that he depends upon presenting us both at the throne of Grace.

I cannot conclude my letter better. Adio! My dearest Augusta. Kiss your father for me, and think very often of

Your truly affectionate sister,

ANGELICA Pisani.

R XXXIV.

gusta to Angelica.

Manor House, Nov.

DEAREST ANGELICA,

YOU are, no doubt, by this time prepared for another volume, and I will endeavour not to disappoint you ; but, first, let me say that I am rather uneasy at not hearing from you : not a single line have I received since we parted. When we left Paris, I thought it very probable that you might imagine our stay would hardly be long enough to give time for a letter reaching me there. I did hope, however, to receive one on my arrival in England ; but I have now been more than six weeks in this country, and I am still hoping for your first letter. I am not apt to fancy gloomy causes for disappointments, and I impute my present one to some casual delay, or it may be the

miscarriage of your letter. Still I am not easy, for even a second letter might have reached me by this time; but certain that it is on its way, I will console myself with writing to you.

Unaccustomed to moving about the world, it requires some extraordinary effort to preserve order in my recollections, and I shall scarcely be able to do it, even with the aid of the minutes I have occasionally made in my pocket-book; but where my dear Angelica perceives heart, she will not be struck with the want of precision. My last was written at Woodlee, but it was written on my arrival, and almost the whole of its contents relate to occurrences in France — and such occurrences! You must have received it by this time; and I long to know your feelings and reflections upon all the circumstances. I besought you, if my expressions relative to my preserver should raise in your mind an idea, that a passion was forming at my heart, not to call it love, as I was certain you would not think it possible when you knew all. I said this more from hints

respecting his character, than from absolute charges against him, except in one instance which I was reluctant to mention, and now would not commit to paper, were it not too clearly corroborated since. The flying, unfixed reports, or, as the French say, *les on dit*, are, that he is the licentious corrupter of female minds, that he barbarously abandons whom he corrupts, and that in one or two instances, the death of his victims has been the consequence of his desertion. I shudder, while I write ; but I shudder, without believing what I shudder at ; there rises in my heart an innate proof against his meriting this character ; the deference, the reserve, the purity of manner which accompanied his kindness to me ; the generosity, the nobleness of his actions and modes of thinking respecting wordly affairs, render such accusations absurd : he may be vicious, but he cannot be barbarous or base. There may be something sufficiently awful on which report has exaggerated, or it may be entirely unfounded ; but I cannot, I must not, I will not believe him a base

villain. But to be vicious, is enough to give a pang to the heart of one so indebted to him, and it is more than enough to guard that heart against a passion which virtue alone can render durable.

That this unhappy young man does not hold vice in horror, I am too assuredly convinced by the instance which I have alluded to. I have seen it, I have trembled at it, I have wept for it, Angelica. He is criminally attached to the wife of a man whom he calls his friend. It was among the reports my cousin mentioned to me. I wished to consider it but as a report, and my will was inclined to flatter the better sentiments he had inspired me with ; but it was not to be — it was the will of Providence that I should know for a certainty, that he had made a bad man the instrument of my preservation. Vice ! did I call it vice ? Even that word, mortifying as it is, is yet too mild to designate such a character — to mark a crime so deeply dyed. I know, my dear Angelica, that our dear Italy is accused of treating this crime lightly, and it may be too frequently the case ; but wherever

it is found, it is too frequent. 'This I know, that in Italy, as everywhere else, women who respect themselves are the most respected, and that those who forsake the paths of virtue, are never respected. Crime cannot change its nature with the change of country.— But having given you my reflections on this unfortunate, shameful, disgraceful state of a man, whom my soul thirsts to honour as an angel, I will endeavour to be more methodical in my account of things and persons.

I have already given you some account of my cousins. I have met with other relations who received me cordially, and have made several agreeable acquaintances. We are at present in Herefordshire, at a distance of a hundred and thirty miles from the metropolis; but I must go back with you to Woodlee, where I had but just alighted you.

Woodlee, my dear Angelica, is a beautiful seat of Godfrey's, in Hampshire, situated on a small river called the Wye. The house is of a rustic kind, very commodious and pleasant, but not large; nor

are the grounds extensive, though, being laid out to the greatest advantage, they appear to occupy more space than they do. It is astonishing with what art and beauty the lands in England are disposed to give nature an embellished form. The roads may be often imagined long alleys, running through successive gardens and shrubberies, and the whole country is thickly studded with elegant villas. I could be content with an abode much inferior to Woodlee, which my cousin proposed for the residence of my father; the neighbourhood is pleasant, and but a morning's ride from the metropolis.

You may suppose that I am not without my share of curiosity, and desire to see London; but it is generally deserted at this time of the year, and, the fineness of the autumn inducing country excursions, it was decided that we should go to Manor-house, my cousin's principal property, become acquainted with his friends there, and take a ride through Herefordshire, and the adjoining counties. We remained, therefore, but a short time at Woodlee, and nothing occurred that

would interest you. We had not leisure to form any intimacy, and my general observations will come better after some residence among my country-folks ; though I have since enlarged my acquaintance considerably, of whom I am going to speak to you in this letter.

We have been a long tour, and I have much to say to you ; but first let me make you acquainted with Manor-house, and the neighbourhood. Open your map, cast your eye upon Hereford, and go down the river Wye five miles, put your finger then upon the north bank, and you will have Manor-house under it. This is a very different Wye from the stream at Woodlee, and its banks present every where very picturesque scenery. My cousin's estate here is large and valuable ; the dwelling-house is an old-fashioned mansion, venerable for its antiquity, and, by its appearance, it is spacious and well calculated for country hospitality, which is not confined to the conviviality of the table, being full of apartments for the accommodation of friends and visitors. The pleasure-grounds are extensive, and

require but little assistance from art ; the house, sheltered by large elms and other fine trees to the north, stands on an eminence on the edge of a large lawn, that extends nearly to the bank of the river, which presents a beautiful object to all the apartments on the south front. Everything is upon a large scale, and, therefore, to me Woodlee is preferable. I hope this is not the sign of a little mind.

You know I can admire magnificent abodes, for example, our Italian palaces ; but, in a private point of view, they fill the mind too much ; one is apt to bestow upon them too great a portion of the idea of eternity : — they seem set, as it were, to defy time, like the Alps and the Apennines, and they infect us with the notion of earthly durability ; we feel fixed to life, as to *terra firma*, instead of considering ourselves at sea in a skiff with an oar, of which cottages remind us : — but I shall not quarrel with Manor-house for this. In England, if inanimate things speak this forcibly to us, this kind of influence is certain to be counteracted once a year : at this time I cannot look out of

the window without encountering the emblems of mortality ; the leaves have been falling daily in myriads for this week or ten days past, and the naked trunks and branches of the trees look struck with death. But may not these torpid bodies be viewed also as emblems, not of earthly duration, but of immortality, — torpid only for a season, to be renovated by the glorious sun ? It is a novel and a dreary sight to me. Imagine, my dear Angelica, all the trees in the vale of Arno stripped of their foliage at once, and not imperceptibly renewed, and you will have some idea of an English landscape in the month of November. George argues that the variations produced by the climate on the trees are far more agreeable than the uniform view of unceasing foliage. I do not agree with him at present, though he thinks I shall in the spring. I must own, however, that I was charmed with the rich and multiplied colours on the face of the country, before the leaves began to fall. But I must not dwell upon landscapes, when

I have such animated views of the heart to send.

In returning to these do not be astonished that Sir Francis Darrell is the first again to meet your eyes. I wish we could for a moment forget what I have already said of him in this letter, that the enthusiasm which his conduct to my father and other circumstances continue to create in my mind may not be misplaced. On our arrival here from Woodlee, my father received a letter from him — such a letter, Angelica! Gracious heaven! Is it possible that this man can be the corrupt creature he appears to be! Mark this exclamation, my dear sister; you will have to repeat it again and again before you read to the end of this letter. It was to remind him of the conversation he had had with him at Paris respecting Grove Park, informing him at the same time that he had given directions to his solicitor to consult with any person my father would appoint relative to the conveyance of the estate. Was not this generosity enough? No, not for Sir Francis

Darrell. — He conjured my father not to wait for the forms of law, but to consider himself immediately as the master of it, and to come without delay and take possession of it. In his reply my father mildly reproached him for not allowing him an opportunity of expressing his feelings, accepted the new obligation, on condition of paying the amount of the bonds due to him, and requested that my cousin Godfrey might have the management of the affairs till the whole debt was paid ; but these letters are so interesting that I must obtain my father's leave to send you a copy of them. You will see how delightfully he apologizes, — and the invitation to Grove Park for the whole family. You will not fail to remark, too, the knowledge he has of the character he bears, and his flattering declaration of unvaried respect for the family. Oh ! that there was no such woman as Lady Betty ! or that my eyes were as obedient as my ears ! I have seen him, I have conversed with him — I shall never see him more, never converse with him again.

I have such animated views of the matter, that I wish to put them in order, and to send.

In returning to the interesting accounts which I have finished that Sir Francis will do it very lamely first again to me, I suppose of the subjects, could for a moment in order, are, I own, already said in my mind. I have particularly the enthusiasm to you of Mrs. Dartford, of father and mother's heart, it seems, I am seriously to create a sensation; of the Mount-Vernon placed and others; — and I will, before I leave, conclude: — but I must previously proceed — to the glorious actions, and, alas! with the inglorious character, of a man born to make me wretched. Again, Angelica, I call upon you not to mistake me: — mine is not the wretchedness of a love-sick girl: — I have already said enough to convince you that it is impossible for me to think of Sir Francis Darrell in that way; — I think of his perdition — I think of his salvation. On which side does doubt preponderate? Is not this enough to make me wretched without being suspected of love? What shall I do to save

DARRELL
13
utterly impossible? Had I
undertake it in spite of
there no man to be found
once the power and the will
gle with his proud intellect and
ace him? Has he no friend? None,
e believe himself; yet I have met with
ne who is said, and who professes, to be
his friend. To him I ventured to speak,
but I fear to little purpose. He cannot
be serious, nor is it clear that he needs
less amendment than his friend; — he
has taken more care of his character, but
he is not altogether unsuspected; he is
lively, agreeable, and much regarded by
George and Caroline; but, from some
tricks he has been playing a young man
in Hampshire, I suspect he is fonder of
mischief than of reasoning. — His name
is Vernon, a brother of Lord Mount-
Vernon — but I took his virtues upon
trust from my cousins, and expressed
to him my wish about his friend. — This
was before I saw Sir Francis.

But I make no progress in my narra-
tive. You will see by his last letter, that

the day appointed to meet at Grove Park was the 26th of last month. George, wishing to show us the Vale of Worcester from the Malvern Hills, we left Manor House in time to go so far before we cut across the country through Warwickshire into Northamptonshire. In our conversations respecting Sir Francis Darrell, my cousins, particularly George, spoke with great regret, and concurred in thinking the reports either false or extremely exaggerated, being so inconsistent, so incompatible with the exalted spirit he possessed; even the attachment that was now talked of with Lady Betty Bramblebear, was but a new report; she was living on the best terms with her husband, and had not forfeited her rank in society. But be his demerits what they might, we all acknowledged that not only was gratitude his due, but that every part of his conduct to us could not but excite esteem and affection, and that we ought to manifest those feelings to all the world, and to himself, if he would allow us. George, who, like

others, had thought it proper to avoid his company, declared himself as anxious as my father to evince his feelings, and that he would do all in his power to prevail upon him to adopt those social habits which, among the well-judging part of society, might lead to happy consequences. Full of these just sentiments, and gratified with this amiable project of Godfrey's, we proceeded pleasantly and gaily through a country finely diversified and enriched with the variegated tints of autumn. The air was still mild, and a long continuance of fine weather, unusual, I am told, gave an appearance to the sky similar to that over our vale of Arno. Our carriage was a light open barouche. Approaching the ascent leading to the Malvern Spa, a gentleman and lady mounted came towards us upon a brisk canter, which, as they passed, was increased into a gallop — Neither looked to the carriage.

“That is Lady Betty Bramblebear, I am sure,” said George.

Caroline said, she had not been able to

distinguish. As to her companion, there seemed to be a common determination among us, neither to ask nor to guess who he might be. For my part, I was conscious that there was no occasion to ask, and I felt no desire to impart my observation; but if there had been a doubt, it was very soon cleared by the liveries on two servants, who, though advancing on a canter, drew up as they passed by the barouche. To me they were no indication, but my cousin looked at Caroline, and then asked my father if he knew the liveries.

“One of them very well,” he replied, “but not the other.”

“The one with which you are unacquainted,” said George, “is Mr. Bramblebear’s.”

There was a short silence — my father broke it, slightly shrugging his shoulders, and saying —

“Yes, the other is the Darrell livery.”

“We shall probably meet them at the Wells,” said George.

“And,” added Caroline, “we must be glad to see them.”

“Glad indeed,” said my father “should I have been to see him had he been alone.”

I was vexed, and remained silent.

When our carriage stopped at the door of the inn, there were two gentlemen standing by it, one of whom put out his hand to assist me in alighting, and proved to be our old fellow-traveller Mr. Falstaff, whom you will remember to have seen at Florence. The other gentleman, I soon learned, was Mr. Bramblebear, who was formally introduced to my father and me; my cousins were acquainted with him before. I was a little afraid of a proposal from him, to join us in the remainder of our journey, Bramblebear Hall being near Peterborough; but from this fear I was relieved by Mr. Falstaff, who informed me that he and Lady Betty were engaged to go with him in another direction. I then told him of our hearing of him on the road from Rouen, and after enquiries for the damaged chariot, I ven-

tured to ask him if his friend was also engaged to accompany him. He said, no — that he had come with him from Clifton, and that they were to part at Malvern, as he had an engagement at home in a few days from that time. I made no further enquiry respecting him. I had a very awkward feeling at the thought of seeing him ride up to the inn with Lady Betty, and the occurrence altogether had so discomposed my spirits, that I was afraid it would be observed : — I therefore requested Caroline to go in with me. — I cannot account for my feelings : — I really dreaded the sight, yet was I involuntarily drawn to the window of the room we were in, the sash of which was up. When I heard the tramping of horses at a distance, I looked down the road. Though it lay upon an ascent, I saw Lady Betty on a hard trot, followed by the two servants, but without her companion. This rather surprised me, and my surprise was greatly encreased, when, throwing herself off her saddle, before the animal she rode had finished his

trotting pace, she exclaimed to her husband, " I think Darrell grows more and more brutish every day — to let me ride two miles back by myself — nothing I could say had power to prevail upon him to act like a gentleman." She then asked George how he did, and enquired for Caroline. At the same time Sir Francis's man drew Mr. Falstaff aside, said something to him and gave him a note : — Mr. Falstaff called Mr. Bramblebear, and I plainly saw that something unexpected had taken place. It was not for us to ask for an explanation, and none did we get. She came up stairs with my father and George, and on being introduced to me offered me her hand with a smile, and in a mild tone of voice congratulated me on my arrival in England and herself on her prospect of forming a friendship with me when we were settled at Grove Park. I saw that Caroline was rather doubtful of my behaviour on an address so sudden and unexpected — but I acquitted myself to her satisfaction. I could not be rude enough to reject her

civility, and endeavouring to smile as well as I could, I thanked her for the honour she did me. She is certainly handsome — her face is fair, but rather long and pointed — she is pink-eyed, the lids meeting *à la Chinoise* ; — she has good teeth, and an agreeable smile, — her neck long and thin : — I should not take the head for the study of a Madona ; but Canova might not think it mis-placed on the shoulders of his Venus. Her person is fine — it is slim but well proportioned. She was in a riding-habit, a costume little known in Italy, but you have sometimes seen our country-women so dressed. It is very convenient for riding, and, as most of the English ladies are good horse-women, it is general here. It was becoming to Lady Betty, and had not the effect of giving an air of boldness which it often does — But I write too much of a woman, whom I have so little reason to respect. I have yet more to say of her, but not at present. Her husband appears to be a polite man, and is uncommonly assiduous in his attentions to her. I should not think of

contemplating him for a picture, but he may be notwithstanding more agreeable as a husband, when well known than she as a wife — for there can be no love without mind and virtue.

It fortunately happened that their horses were ordered to be ready at a certain hour ; and after half an hour of unmeaning talk, they took their leave, and departed in company with our friend Mr. Falstaff. Sir Francis was not to have gone with them, but neither was the separation to have been so abrupt. Since I was doomed to have so painful a proof of the truth of one report, it was some relief to my spirits, that he did not return with her to the inn. It would have been dreadful for me to meet him for the very first time after he had carried me to Paris in such a state and with such an impression on my mind. But do I not say *proof of the truth*, with too ready an inclination to believe ? — It certainly did so appear to me at first, but on reflection may he not have met her accidentally ? Why leave her so abruptly ? If attached, why give her cause

to think him brutal, — to say it? It is very evident he was not engaged to continue in her company, and he had come with Mr. Falstaff from Clifton. This was my train of reasoning in a fit of absence while Caroline was listening to some detail from the landlady, and it re-placed me in that state of doubt, which previous to the meeting admitted a fair hope that much of the reproachful part of his character was the malignant effusion of calumny. My feelings in a considerable degree returned to their old channel, and my heart was full of gratitude and of anxiety to save him. When we renewed our conversation on the subject, Caroline expressed an opinion similar to my hope, but both my father and George imagined that there was ground enough in the familiarity of Lady Betty, and in her expression of displeasure, to conclude that she had not been slandered; but their feelings towards him remained unaltered, and George, God bless him! said, with more ardour than he had ever before shown, “What a delightful reflection would it be could we restore Darrell to

virtue and to character !” What would I not give if George and Caroline would embrace our faith ! But I fear to set them an example of endeavouring to persuade — I already know their wish on the subject, but their kindness is beyond expression. I expected in this country to meet attacks more or less delicate or coarse on my attachment to our religion ; but truth obliges me to confess, that I have met with none, that I find many uniting in the same worship, and that my friends, far from controlling my devotion, afford me every facility to indulge it.

And now, my dear Angelica, let us pursue our route. My letter is already so long that I can afford little more of it to general topics. The Malvern Wells are mineral springs, of which there are a variety in other parts of England — the view from the hill is magnificently extensive, and the richness of the country unrivalled. The harvest being housed, it is the time of hunting, and in our way we several times fell in with packs of hounds, the sight of which my cousin George seemed to enjoy. We visited se-

veral great towns in our way, and at length, on the 26th of October, about noon, arrived at Grove Park.

I will not, Angelica, attempt to express my feelings — your heart will echo them ; it is enough to say that we arrived — why should such feelings manifest themselves by tears ? There are tears of joy as well as of sorrow, and there are tears of mingled recollection. Our emotions had different causes, but their effects were the same upon us all — tears. As we approached the gate, I saw them standing in my father's eyes ; I saw them in George's and Caroline's, but theirs were mixed with smiles when the barouche stopped at the house-door : my father could restrain himself no longer ; he threw his arms around my neck, and dropping his head upon my breast, wept aloud, and poured his tears into my bosom. Sir Francis Darrell was standing on the step, at the threshold, to receive us. The servant opened the carriage-door, but for a minute or two we none of us moved. I was on the side farthest from the house —

“For Heaven’s sake, Mr. Saville,” cried Sir Francis, who had come round and opened the door near which I sat, “have mercy on yourself and on Miss Saville — this must not be — pray help me, Mr. Godfrey, to unlock his arms.”

“My dear uncle,” said George, “I entreat you to compose yourself.”

As he said this, he unclasped his arms, and I was in a moment, I know not how, transported into the hall, and found myself sitting on a bench with my dear Caroline, who was crying over me. At the same time I saw my father with Sir Francis Darrell’s hand in his, pressing it to his bosom, and leaning on his neck.

“Darrell,” said he, “I cannot speak my feelings.”

“I am sure,” replied he, “I cannot speak mine, but I can say that I never had such before, and that no satisfaction that may have resulted to you from my conduct can exceed, or I think equal, my happiness at this moment.”

My eyes, Angelica, were fixed upon him — there was no bending of the brow, no transition of struggling emotions — it

was uniform benevolence and joy—it was a glorious emanation of the Divinity that stirred within him — his countenance was truly beautiful: — such is the effect of virtue reflected by the combination of features given to man, and well may it be called the “human face divine.” I could see no stain upon it, it appeared to me pure and unblemished, mingling the charm of infancy with the dignity of manhood. If corruption had crept in upon his intervening age it seemed eradicated, or the effulgence of virtue had dispersed it. It was not from my heart alone that this enchantment of a divine emanation, working a forgetfulness of absent deformities, banished suspicion, and opened it to admiration and affection: my father was absorbed by the vision, for such it appeared to him — Godfrey and Caroline, hardly more awake, both shook hands warmly with him. He did not come forward to me, but I could not be the only one who did not shake hands with him. — I rose and went towards him; I put out my hand; I attempted to speak—but agitation choked my utterance;—I should have sunk to the

ground had he not supported me and helped me back to the seat. In spite of my agitation, I observed that when he took my hand he did not press it : — the occasion might have excused it, perhaps called for it. I felt a slight mortification ; but, in endeavouring afterwards to account for it, I attributed it to a virtuous resolution of avoiding the slightest excitement of partialities, the practice of which he might imagine I had heard as part of his character. But indeed he has fully convinced me, that he bestows a degree of esteem upon me which I fear he has seldom or never felt before for any of our sex. Though I lament the erroneous opinions he has formed of women, I cannot but be gratified for this exception in my favour ; and I feel even more gratitude for it than for the indelible obligation he rendered me in France.

I know, my dear Angelica, that you will not only excuse, but be pleased with the digressions from my narrative, into which my feelings lead me ; but I must proceed, and be brief too, in detailing the heads of my journal, or my letter will not reach you before Christmas.

When we had recovered sufficient composure to speak and to move in our usual way, Sir Francis led us to the eating-room, where we found a table spread with the finest fruits of the country and other refreshments. We were waited upon by two of his servants. We brought with us George's man, Caroline's maid Ann, and Madelena, who had followed us on the road in a post-chaise. — By-the-bye, Madelena begins to talk English, and is very useful to me. We spent nearly an hour most agreeably over our regale, except that my father could not regain his cheerfulness, and looked more at Sir Francis than I could have wished. The cause, in spite of the length of time, was easily imagined, and every thing was done to restore his more peaceful feelings, which by degrees returned, but not completely during the whole of our stay at Grove Park. Our entertainer, for such he considered himself, spoke with ease on the subjects naturally occurring, often with pleasantry, and during the whole day appeared to the greatest advantage; — indeed so much had he gain-

ed upon George, that I heard him whisper to my father as we were going through the rooms — “ He is a fascinating young man.”

To give you a particular account of Grove Park at present would extend my letter to a very great length, and interfere with what I am sure is more interesting to my dearest Angelica; it will be more seasonable, and perhaps assist less interesting topics, when we are settled there in the spring: I shall therefore say little more of it now, than that it is a very sweet place, and that my father finds both the house and the grounds very much improved, as well as the whole estate, in a profitable point of view. — We went over the house, and through the gardens and pleasure-grounds. Every thing was in complete order — the house full and tastefully furnished without pomp. Servants had been sent from Belmont Lodge to attend to the service of the house till my father appointed his own. — Out of doors we found attached to the place a head gardener, and a cottager with his wife and children, whose

occupations were to raise poultry and assist the gardener. With respect to the land attached to the park, and likewise all held on lease, Sir Francis told my father that his steward would wait upon him to give him every information.

To tell you how the day passed, at least with me, my dear Angelica, I believe the most accurate phrase I can use is intoxication, but not of a low or boisterous nature; it was an elevated state of mind produced by the over-excitement of unusual circumstances:—my feelings mounted to a higher pitch of zeal, and I had more than once a great inclination to try my eloquence at an extempore sermon. I was sober enough to restrain myself, and was, as becomes our sex, more passive than active on the few occasions that occurred for the exertion of supporting opinions by reasoning. I say few, as Sir Francis occasionally advanced some extraordinary ones, but none offensive, none attacking religion; — and all he said was, with that unclouded brow with which he received us, the uniform continuance of which much surprised me; and what he thought it necessary to main-

tain was done with a flexibility and a yielding smile, as if he doubted his strength, and only argued to give the pleasure of victory to his opponent. There is a fine chamber-organ in the large drawing-room, on which I played, though not at his request or by his encouragement:—it was in compliance with my father's desire. Sir Francis politely listened; but it was while I played and sung that I fancied I perceived something of the brow I had studied in Paris;—it was so transient, however, that it did not occupy my thought a moment. He is fond of music, but he did not say so on this occasion, nor did he compliment my performance, or urge its continuance—he only listened, looked, and bowed. I did not take it amiss:—I clearly observed throughout the day that he made it a law to himself to show me no particular attention: his general one was enough for me; it was easy, polished, and pleasing.

Would to Heaven he had persisted in his adherence to this law, and that he had left me impressed with the belief that his mind was tranquillized, that I was indiffe-

rent to him, that time and reason working together might effect, with the blessing of Providence, the sincere wish of my heart in his favour! Indifferent to him! Construe not this expression, Angelica, into an idea of my having raised in his heart the passion of love. No, my dear sister; Sir Francis Darrell is not in love with your Augusta — he can love no more — his brain is more likely to be affected than his heart.

There is a small grove of evergreen shrubs and trees at a remote part of the ground annexed to the house. I had not seen it, or heard of it, till my unwary foot came upon it at an unfortunate moment. I had risen the morning after our arrival earlier than usual; indeed my sleep through the night had been disturbed, and I rose because I was restless. — The Aurora was remarkably fine; the sun was just rising. — The servants were not up, but I found no difficulty in opening the door to the garden — it was shut but not locked. The air was delightfully refreshing; the stillness that reigned around me was tranquillizing: — I walked slowly

on : — the consciousness of being where my dear mother had passed the first years of her marriage brought her to my mind — I associated my earliest recollections with those of Signa, and I stood with my dear Angelica at her tomb.

Absorbed in these imaginations, my feet had borne me on without the direction of thought, and I was recalled to the perception of the things about me by a dark-green paling which separated a thick plantation from the pleasure-grounds — a gate to the enclosure stood open. — Invited by the freedom of the passage, and unconscious of any mystery within, I proceeded — the narrow path ran winding under trees towards the centre of the grove. — I had not gone forward many steps before I was warned by a groan that I was not the only person in the place — I stopped and looked round me — through some lower branches of a fir-tree I saw a man ; he leaned against what I thought a statue, and I could distinguish that he was equipt for riding, having on boots and spurs. — I was more surprised than alarmed — I

sought a freer opening of the branches to see him more plainly.

Conceive my feelings when I beheld Sir Francis Darrell, his handkerchief held by his right hand to his eyes, his head inclined on the edge of a pedestal that supported an urn, and his left hand suspended lifeless at his side, holding a small square plate of silver. What would I not have given to be back again in my chamber unobserved! — Here was his mystery. — I wished not to know it — but to be suspected of curiously prying into it was worse than death. I trembled at the thought — but at the moment I was going to retire, more gently if possible than I had come, before I could make a step, before I could withdraw my eyes, he raised himself, and taking from the pedestal a cup, gazed at it, and, in a voice that thrilled to my soul, exclaimed, “Murderer! thou art innocent!” My imagination took fire — I saw him about to swallow poison — I gave an involuntary scream, and only saved myself from falling by clasping a tree.

In a moment he stood before me — the placid brow was vanished — it wore a

deeper arch than ever, and fire flashed from his eye.

“You!” cried he, “What brought you hither? What have you seen? What have you heard?”

“Nothing,” said I, trembling.

“Nothing?” repeated he, sternly.—
“Are you sure?”

I burst into tears, and fell on my knees, wildly begging for mercy, as if he were about to murder me—his countenance softened; he seized my hands.

“No kneeling to *me*, I beseech you—kneel to your God; *you* have one, beseech him to spare you: *I* have *none* to spare me—do *you* spare me then, and be a divinity to me—rise, I shall go mad if you do not rise.”

He raised me trembling and, before I was firmly on my feet, threw his arms around me, pressed me to him, and wept most bitterly. I made an effort and disengaged myself—but tottered and had scarcely power to retain my senses.

“Resist me not,” cried he, “resist me not—this is the embrace of virtue—

it is the last I shall give on earth. — On earth ! — it is the last I shall ever give.”

And again he wept aloud — my tears flowed silently. He presently recovered himself sufficiently to recollect the situation in which I stood.

“What am I about,” said he, looking stedfastly at me : “I have wronged you. — No paltry passions can dwell in such a temple. — It is indeed a very early hour, but oh ! forgive me, your steps were not directed hither by curiosity.”

“Oh, no !” cried I.

“No !” replied he : “it is fate, and you were doomed to know my secret.”

“No, indeed,” said I, “nor wish it, nor think of it. I believe it was Providence that appointed my coming hither to repay in some measure the debt I owe you. — Oh ! let me not have obeyed the sacred mandate in vain.”

“What mean you ?” replied he.

“Promise me, I conjure,” said I, “to attempt your life no more.”

“My life !” exclaimed he, “I am more at a loss than ever to comprehend you.”

“Nay, then,” I cried, “you are resolved to deny my trust in Providence.”

“No, trust on, ’tis best — but explain yourself — I was making no attempt on my life.”

“What then was in the cup I saw?”

He started, and said —

“The cup you saw! Yes, you are too ingenuous to deny that I have unwarily divulged my secret — come then, come” cried he, seizing my hand, and hurrying me on in defiance of my struggling.

It was but a short turn to the spot where I had seen him; the cup was on the pedestal, in the front of which was a small brass door with a key in the lock of it. Coming within sight of it, I begged him to stop but for an instant — he complied, and I addressed him with more calmness than I had been mistress of from the moment I had seen the cup in his hand.

“Give me leave, Sir,” said I, “to put you in mind that at Grove Park you are still the master, and that in every part of it I am under your protection.”

He quitted his hold, but fixed his eyes upon me.

“ I say this,” continued I, “ to recall you to yourself, and being yourself, I know well that you need no petition for protection anywhere.”

“ Speak on,” said he.

I told him how accidentally I had entered the place we were in, and assured him that I had hardly been a minute on the spot when I saw him ; that perceiving his emotion and the taking up the cup, the horrid thought that presented itself to my mind occasioned my scream and the agitation in which he found me.

“ And now, Sir,” added I, “ I request to be treated with that consideration which your own mind on reflection will suggest.”

He pressed his forehead with his hand, and said :

“ Miss Saville, make of me what you please — I will not detain you against your will — grant me but a moment’s attention.”

“ It is not, I hope, to be acquainted with the secret you talk of,” said I ; “ that I must not know.”

“It is,” replied he, “unfit for your ear, and I will spare you the recital. I believe it to be confined solely to my knowledge; the world guess at something, and blacken me they know not why — I am bad enough, and more unhappy than bad, and more repentant than either.”

I believe, in spite of the painful situation of my mind, that my countenance expressed something like pleasure, for he shook his head, waved his hand and said:

“No, not that, not repentance that justifies atonement.”

I could not help interrupting him.

“Oh yes, yes,” cried I, “all repentance justifies it, it is the very bond of peace to the wounded spirit.”

“Peace! talk not of peace; where does it dwell? With the unfeeling and the low. Does it dwell with virtue? Does it dwell with sense? Why, then, has your’s been ever disturbed? Bliss and woe are most blindly scattered over the world, and there is but one state of certain peace. But let me not stray from my purpose in requesting your attention.

Miss Saville, you perhaps see me for the last time."

I shuddered and cried,

"Oh no, no."

"You misconstrue my meaning," resumed he, "I have no intention to commit suicide. — Enduring has its excitements, and my life belongs to other beings, whom I will not rob — there was nothing in the cup."

This declaration gave me a kind of new life.

"And," continued he, "when I say that you perhaps see me for the last time, I rather mean mentally than literally. Meet we may, but I owe it to you to avoid your conversation, and to pay you little attention: should you observe it, impute it not to neglect, but ascribe it to my devotion. Will you forgive me, if I say, that I have not found many of your sex worthy of esteem? But that may be owing to the worthy part of them not admitting me to their confidence. There are two grand emotions which seem to have been intended to give a charm to life — esteem and love. I sometimes

dream that I enjoyed both at a very early age ; but it is long since I cared for the one, and I am become incapable of the other. I own, could I have enjoyed the former from you, without the fear of casting a blemish on your judgment, it would have compensated — but that weight, which is nothing for me to bear, would crush your delicate frame — no — it must not be — but I am still straying from my purpose. I fear to ask a favour ; it is too like imposing a task.”

“ Propose it,” cried I ; “ it is granted before it is named.”

“ Look at that urn,” said he. — I looked at him as if doubting ; on which he continued :

“ I mean not to recall my word — you cannot but suppose that it is a memorial : — to tell you why it was stationed here rather than at Belmont would render some knowledge of the ideas with which it is associated necessary — it imports not — let it pass. — There is a small chest concealed in the pedestal : — when closed, a slab of marble so fits in with the other

“Is it,” said I, “for me to —?”

“Right! right!” cried he, interrupting me, “I forgot myself—but I may leave it to you in my will. — Oh these agitations!”

He grew pale as he said this, and with a faint smile, more fitted to create pain than pleasure, added:

“And now, I have nothing more to say to you, but to beg your forgiveness for my conduct this morning: pray impute its roughness to agitation, to suffering, to any thing but want of respect: my nature was once softer, but the world hardens it.”

You must imagine, my dear Angelica, the state of your poor friend's nerves, during this agitated, unexpected interview with a man, with whom her thoughts had previously been so much occupied, and for the preservation of whose soul she was still so anxious. When he concluded, I felt a struggle in my mind between that anxiety and the diffidence attending my inability to reason with a strong though perverted understanding; but the former conquered so far as to ex-

press my sentiment in the shape of a request.

“May I in turn,” said I, “ask a favour?”

“Let it,” replied he, “be only within the limit of possibility.”

“Think me not,” I said, “an enthusiastic bigot, if the favour I ask relate to things respecting which I think your understanding errs. I have heard some of your sentiments with infinite pain. Oh! Sir, be assured that you are not born to die for ever. But I do not mean to presume to enter into an argument with a mind acute enough to deceive itself in reality: — I mean but to ask a favour, which is, that you would revise your opinions with an humble disposition, and give hope some chance to gladden a heart, which I know to be so capable of doing good.”

“Shall I,” said he, smiling very benignly, “tell you that the voice of an angel has already begun my conversion? If my conviction, like your’s, depended upon the heart, I should be the most credulous of men.”

“Is it,”

“Right” is not the term for faith,”
 ing me,
 leave it I say devout?” replied he:
 agitat: had feelings at my heart lately
 Hould not sleep eternally — they
 a frounted to my brain. This tells
 th: that love should be gifted with an
 mortal nature ; But —

— “No,” cried I, “there is no *but*, —
 it is, it is immortal ; and so are you, and
 so are all of us.”

“The language,” said he, “is sweet ;
 — I will not argue against it : — I will
 promise you to revise my opinions, and
 humbly too ; but I must add rationally
 too. — Give me an immortal spirit, and
 a God that cares for me — mind, that
 cares for me — and then you will only
 have to add lessons against suicide.” —

“Oh !” said I, “treat it more seri-
 ously.” —

“I will keep my promise,” he replied ;
 “I will keep it seriously ; I will strip wit
 and ridicule of their charms, and I will
 address myself solely to reason.” —

“With due humility,” added I.

“With the humility of an Anchorite,”

said he — “Farewell ! That is your way ; this is mine : — farewell, farewell !”

These were the last words I heard him speak ; — he was out of my sight in a moment, taking a different path from that by which I had entered.

Left on this mysterious spot, my thoughts rested on the agitated occurrences of the morning. I deeply grieved that I had been seriously involved in the certainty of some mystery influencing the character and manners of Sir Francis Darrell. I was conscious that it must have a great effect on my future residence at Grove Park, and I feared that inferences might be drawn by my father, which would tend to disquiet his mind. On the other hand, the latter part of my conversation with him was of a very consolatory nature. He did not reject the prayer I made relative to the reconsideration of his opinions ; — he even expressed sentiments favourable to hope ; — he owned that he had been conscious of feelings of a nature that ought to be renewed in eternity. The thought was delightful to my mind ; — I felt that I

"Cautious is not the term for faith,"

"Should I say devout?" replied he:

"I have had feelings at my heart lately that should not sleep eternally — they are mounted to my brain. This tells me that I should be gifted with an immortal nature; But —

"No," cried I, "there is no but, — it is, it is immortal; and so are you, and we are all of us."

"The language," said he, "is sweet; — I will not argue against it: — I will promise you to revise my opinions, and answer you; but I must add rationally — Give me an immortal spirit, and a God that cares for me — mind, that cares for me — and then you will only have to add human arguments." —

"Oh," said I, "treat it more seriously."

"I will keep my promise," he replied; "I will keep it seriously; I will not make a mistake of mere chance, and I will not be misled by any of your arguments."

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AUGUSTA.

would give my life to realize my hope, and I addressed a prayer to the Bestower of all good, in which I zealously expressed that sentiment. I fear my zeal hurried me into an impious presumption, and I have since reflected upon its ardour with some pain.

And now, my dear Angelica, in spite of the abrupt conclusion of this letter, in spite of the subjects in connection with its beginning, I must close it; — not on account of its length, for my journal goes on much farther; but because I have an excellent opportunity of dispatching it without delay; and because, which is perhaps the stronger motive, I feel that I cannot at present resume the other topics on which I have to write. Another dispatch shall soon follow this, and I may in the meantime receive your's.

On returning to the house and rejoining the family, I found that Sir Francis Darrell was not expected at breakfast. Attending my father to his chamber the night before, for the purpose of a short conversation, he told him that he should

leave Grove Park in the morning early. He spoke to him with some confidence and much feeling on the situation in which he stood in the world, and left an impression on my father's mind of the most favourable kind. — This spread to my cousins, and it was not diminished by the account I gave of what had passed in the Grove. We concurred in imputing his errors and misfortunes to an unhappy attachment in extreme youth, which had terminated tragically : — we lamented his state, and were unanimous in thinking that he deserved a better one.

Adio ! my dearest Angelica ; ever
love

Your most affectionate sister,

AUGUSTA.

LETTER XXXV.

Sir Francis Darrell to Mr. Vernon.

May Fair. — London, Dec.

MY DEAR VERNON,

I sought seclusion, and I have found it here. London is the most retired spot in the world: I managed to get in unknown in spite of the newspapers, and I have been locked up in my library for these ten days past, endeavouring to compose my spirits, and reduce the fever of my brain, intending to seize the first calm hour to thank you for the letter which I received from you at Malvern Wells. I fear, if I wait for one of perfect calm, the waning year will close, and a new one see me still your debtor. Vernon, you must take me as you find me. — Bearing is the essence of friendship, as relieving is one of its accidents.

It will be a relief to me to write to you, write how I may, and there is as little fear of the sombre drops of ink from my pen depressing those enviable spirits of yours, as of a single drop of laudanum in your glass of sparkling champagne setting you to sleep.

But where shall I begin? Shall I tell you what medicine I have been taking for this everlasting restlessness, and the name of the prescribing doctor? No, you have laughing fits enough both at home and abroad, you shall not laugh at me; — stick to your Rufuses, your Lady Barbaras, and your other butts, in and out of your Vortex; my absurdities shall be reserved for my own amusement, to create that solitary laugh which is not incompatible with sackcloth and sorrow — that laugh, not of the heart, of the brain, which starts from the throat, when man is wise or mad enough to detect his own folly in his hour of desolation. Yet, after this, laugh at me if you can: — I have been reading the most ancient publication we Europeans know of, in five volumes; —

a task set me by a baby : — but I make as little of it now as I did when expounded by the most learned doctors of our university. I was sure it would be so, but the pretty thing looked so like a *real* angel, that I imagined that I had a call in a vision, like the celebrated Colonel Gardiner, during which I made a promise to the angel to examine the state of my intellect, and to do it with becoming seriousness. I am fulfilling this promise in both points, and if I have laughed, it has been at myself, and not at my studies. However unpromising my progress, I will keep my word ; — I will keep it not only as a point of honour, but as a source of pleasure, that of giving pleasure to one who merits it, the only pleasure I now care for.

I think I see your face on reading this, while you give yourself credit for your penetration. You talked of matrimony at the bare mention of *respect* ; — were I to make use of the word which presents itself to express the effect of the impression made on my heart by the tasking Angel, you would completely

misunderstand it : you would be for flying to my solicitor with instructions to draw out the settlements. You know me not, Vernon : — Matrimony ! A fine preserver I should prove indeed ! — Propose to me some form of oath more potent than that of “ Dicers,” and of lovers, and I will swear by it that I love her, and I will swear by it that I never will marry her, never carry pollution to her arms. Have me ! No ; — and could I for a moment imagine that she would, that moment would commence her degradation in my mind.

The detestation I have for society, my love of solitude is not incompatible with the desire of opening, of unburdening the heart, which is the grand charm of friendship, — a charm, without which, solitude, the communion with eloquently silent, unmalignant nature, would often sink the barometer of the human frame to too low a pitch. Friendship expands its nervous fluid, and raises it to the pleasant temperature of lofty imagination. Of all the evils of life, and evils enough there are, none exceeds that

which is produced by the want of the pure air of friendship ; — without it the world would be little more than a large Grotto del Cane, purposely constructed for the suffocation of the unhappy creatures sent into it. Such it nearly is to me, and, but for the confidence I repose in you, my dear Vernon, and the interest you take in me, the oppression of my mind would be even more intolerable than it is. Still I am not fully open to you — there are — but there I scarcely dare commune even with myself : — I avoid the reflection — it leads to madness ; and mad I was when I ventured upon it for the last time — the last time but one. I fear reason fills but a slippery throne in “ this distracted globe ” of mine ; and though I think the madman may sometimes be envied, I would, while I live, fain keep within those limits of imagination that still confine the senses to their obvious uses. I will think that way no more : I will give my thoughts employment of other kinds, and for the present I will endeavour to turn them

as sedately as *I can* on the occurrences of which I have now to write.

Resolving to avoid the Bramblebears for the present, I hastened, as I believe I told you was my intention, to join Falstaff at Clifton. — I found him there, and we shortly after proceeded on our excursion. It certainly was not in my contemplation to meet the Manor-House family at Malvern. You are right in judging that I would sooner have gone to the Land's End. — I cannot say I did not meet them — but you shall hear, after I have replied to your letter, which was waiting at the inn for me.

You cry out shame upon me for taking time to be in love with loveliness itself, and tell me that you were in love with Miss Saville in less than ten minutes; that if you had twice ten thousand pounds a-year, you would outstrip me in expedition to lay them at her feet, and you warn me that she cannot be long disengaged. Take my answer in the ascending order. — If she remains long disengaged, it will be owing not to a want of lovers, but to their want of merit, to her nicety of dis-

crimination, and to her scrupulous notions respecting marriage. That you should fall in love in ten minutes, and wish for twenty thousand pounds a-year to court withal, is very natural ; but on the part of the lady, having still a voice, she would certainly estimate the twenty thousand pounds by the value of a ten minute passion, and not the passion by the pounds. Now with respect to the shame you cast upon me for my insensibility, you see by the beginning of this letter I have already wiped that away, by declaring to you my readiness to swear that I do love her.

You speak in rapture of this beauty, and I believe you feel as you speak : — but *your* heart is sufficiently guarded by the centinels of its rigid governor, Prudence, to keep it from playing the fool. Yet you would have me offer *mine*, though its empty, desolate state is safeguard enough without any other centinel ; and by way of encouragement you set about proving to me that her virtue of gratitude moveth her to pray for my soul, but that the devil-a-bit does she care for my body, except as it may hereafter be dragged out

of its grave by the former. I have no doubt you are right, Vernon. — I have since had some conversation with her myself, inspired I think by the same virtue which prompted her dialogue with you, and I am truly glad of it. How could it be otherwise? She must not love me. — I think she does not hate me. This is all I wish; and from the conduct of her relations, I am sure no pains will be taken to poison her better sentiment. Indeed I believe her sincerely interested for the state of my mind, which I own creates in me something of a grateful feeling towards her, because there is no affectation of piety about her: — that would have been attended with a very different sensation. Her piety is not obtrusive or ridiculous: — she pities me, and she is bold enough to express a wish that the man whom she considers as a benefactor would not turn his back upon Heaven.

And why should not young Dartford have her, if he can win her? I know him, though he has been taught to avoid me. He is a good young man, with a

large fortune, and a Catholic. The unsteadiness of his heart is a reason in favour of it, as he is just one of those men whom one would be happy to save from destruction. If he marries a weak woman, he is lost for life:—he will come to himself, and see his folly—it will kill his mother, and the rest of his days will be spent in shame and remorse. Here is a woman who, whether he marries in his senses, or comes to them after marriage, must make him the best and happiest of his kind. — It is most devoutly to be wished. Mrs. Dartford is right; and as I believe her son only wants such a wife to become deserving of her, I wish her diplomatic courtship success. I will add, that as I have resolved not to suffer the thought of blasting so lovely a flower to enter my brain, I shall not consider your assisting your friend in her wishes as any deficiency of friendship to me. Yet, Vernon, pause awhile, not on my account, but on her's who is so much concerned — let us fully understand young Dartford — have him back first. What do I say? Indeed there is no danger that so sensible a crea-

ture as this beauty of yours should come to a determination of any kind during the absence of the person pleaded for; so let him finish his travels, and return at his leisure, when he has fully contemplated foreign countries. It were best that he should plead his cause himself, and we support it. His mother may talk to her in the meantime.—there will be no harm in that.

Now as to losing my relish for Bramblebear Hall, and the change of tone you have perceived in me. I told you once that my follies were not of my own seeking; and I have always assured you that I am no gallant, by which term I mean a man that lies in wait to pique himself upon the frailty of a woman; a character, it must be owned, of no slight brilliancy in your Vortex, and somehow or other it is mine. But, if it were the fact, there are circumstances that would take away all relish for a continuance of the folly at Bramblebear Hall.—I do not know that even to you I can mention some of these with propriety. It is not only that the man is my neighbour, and

that I have professed a friendship for him, however dissimilar our minds, but I have been kind to him, and serviceable to him. Now circumstances of this nature — benefits bestowed — are even stronger against the deed than benefits received, and I felt that I should “shut the door, not bear the knife myself.” Lady Betty was born for the Vortex, but I could not *lose my heart* under Bramblebear’s roof. I was happy to have formed my Parisian project; and I pursued it with double pleasure in escaping undetected from my own reproach. When I returned, my mind possessed a twofold consciousness, that gave me a certain degree of elevation — excuse the vanity — which left your Vortex at a great distance below me. Arriving at Belmont, I could not but go over to Bramblebear Hall — but all this is folly; — I wish I could avoid it. I did not stay long — a weak, silly — I am inclined to say wicked — woman. — So much for my loss of relish and change of tone.

As for that pious or rather impious dandy, Master Rufus — though, in spite of

very different sensations, I could not help laughing at his letter, I think the hypocritical rogue deserves a horse-whipping ; first, for daring to see the silk stocking, and then for his double daring to remember the sight of it, and record his recollection in a letter. — You must expose the fellow.

It is now time, my dear Vernon, to proceed to the account I have to give you of occurrences since my last. Owing to some delay of Falstaff's before we got to Chepstow, I began to be afraid that Mr. Saville might reach Grove Park before I was there to receive him ; and I persuaded Falstaff to put on directly for Malvern, where I expected your letter. To my infinite surprise and mortification I there found the Bramblebears. They were aware of my route, and also knew that the Manor House family were to be at Grove Park at the time I mentioned. Bramblebear, to please Lady Betty, thought proper to throw her directly in my way, and they had been lounging a couple of days at the Wells. It was impossible for me to avoid spending the

rest of the day on which we arrived, and part of the next — besides, our horses required rest. — Falstaff drove a curricule, and I had led horses. Bramblebear having at meeting told us that they proposed going to Cheltenham, Falstaff engaged to accompany them next day, as I had decided on parting with him at Malvern. This engagement being made, I had only to make out the time as well as I could ; and, in spite of Lady Betty's frowns, to be off early in the morning. I was the more resolved on this, in consequence of the information in your letter respecting the intentions of the Savilles and Godfreys to visit the Wells.

It unfortunately happened that Lady Betty had been admiring a lady's horse which the innkeeper had for sale, and nothing would serve her but my opinion upon its paces. Bramblebear too begged it as a favour, and it was settled that her Ladyship should mount it in the morning, and that I should take a ride with her on the road in the valley of Worcester. Accordingly after breakfast we mounted and descended the hill. Be-

fore we reached the bottom I perceived a barouche at some distance, followed by a post-chaise, and I immediately conjectured it to be the family from Manor House. Shocked at the idea of being seen by them in company with a woman of whom I knew report had begun to take its usual liberty, I resolved to pass without notice. I proposed to Lady Betty to try if the horse she rode would be made to continue its canter in meeting the carriage. — Not aware of my motive, she agreed; and before we came up to the barouche, we had pushed both horses into a gallop. — A distant glance assured me I was right in my conjecture; I averted my face when passing, and rode so fast, that the persons in the carriage could not have distinguished me. I was extremely vexed, and made use of the occasion to advise Lady Betty; but this only served to make her angry, and, what was worse, to make her shed tears. Nothing on earth could have prevailed upon me to return to the Wells; and, in spite of her anger and of her tears, I gave her a very serious lecture. — I then wrote a

few lines with a pencil on the back of a letter to Falstaff, begging him to make the best of the appearance for me to Bramblebear, assuring him that I was of necessity obliged to go on. — I then took a kind leave of Lady Betty, entreating her to forgive me, and to allow me to continue that friendship for her which would be as lasting as life. She at first expressed her astonishment at my want of common civility, and insisted on my riding back with her. — I contrived to pacify her, and she rode back attended by her servant and mine, whom I sent with my note, and to take care of my things.

The conduct of this unfortunate woman gave me great pain, which is renewed as I think of her while I write. I never knew, I never felt before, the immense, the infinite distance between a weak and a virtuous woman — the passion the former excites cannot be called love, if that inspired by the latter have a right to the name. — It bears no more resemblance to it, than artificial fire, consuming the object it once inflames, to the adorable star that is the essence of animated being.

It is true that we have given the term to the Cupid of the Roman and the Eros of the Greek : but they have their distinctive epithets ; and the Pandemian Deity differed essentially from that love,

“ Which kindles in the inmost mind
One lovely flame — for once — for one —
A vestal fire, which there enshrined,
Lives on, till life itself be done.
All other fires are of the earth,
And transient.”

Unfortunate women talk of love by way of unction to their minds, and labour to lose sight of the apposite terms which truth has adapted to their feelings and their actions ; but they never fail discovering, and soon, that all undue gallantry is in its nature transient, and that love “ lives on ” but for the virtuous.

Let us now turn, Vernon, from a weak to a virtuous woman. Leaving my horse at Worcester with orders for Aaron to bring it on gently, I posted the rest of the way, and arrived at Belmont on the 24th of the month, and went over the next day to Grove Park. I took pleasure in going repeatedly over the house

and grounds, reflecting with delight, but not with pride, on the act I was about to do, and painting to my imagination the happiness of which the place was now to be the scene. It is a very sweet spot, and, if it does not vie with Belmont Lodge in extent and magnificent varieties, it is distinguished by some superior beauties which nature has bestowed upon it. I had resolved on leaving every thing, both within and without, as it stood when I went to Paris; and, as the furniture was not old, I adhered to my resolution. I made very few alterations, but I made an addition in consequence of what I had learned respecting Miss Saville's skill and delight in music from Falstaff, who spoke with ecstasy of her execution and taste on the organ, with which he had been charmed while he was staying at Florence. I had a fine-toned chamber organ of proper power fixed in the large room, and I placed other musical instruments about, as if they had belonged to the house.

There was nothing wanted for the reception of a family but servants, and I

sent mine to attend till Mr. Saville should appoint his own.

I slept at Belmont, and returned early next morning. The party arrived about noon, as I expected. I went to the door to meet them ; it stood wide open ; the barouche drew up — but here I should lay down my pen, for how shall I describe the scene, or my own feelings ? Mr. Godfrey was the only person that acknowledged or perceived me : he bowed without a word, holding his wife's hands in his, while she, with tears running down her cheeks, was trying to look through them at the father weeping in the bosom of his daughter, whom he clasped in his arms : the carriage-door was open, but no one moved or spoke : Saville's agitation was extreme : his daughter, scarcely less agitated, turned very pale. It alarmed me ; I flew to the opposite door where she sat ; with her cousin's assistance I tore her from her father, and once more took into my arms this lovely burden, whom I instantly conveyed into the hall, where she was soon revived by Mrs.

Godfrey, who went in with me. The emotion at my heart was sweet, but a sweeter still was reserved for me to complete this reception.

Mr. Saville recovering, followed us with Godfrey; and we were all standing at a little distance from the bench, on which Miss Saville still was sitting at Mrs. Godfrey's desire. On my expressing the pleasure I felt at their arrival, I was again afraid of Saville's feelings; but he curbed them, saying he could not express them, and clasping my hand, pressed it to his heart. On his quitting it, Godfrey took it, and gave it a cordial shake; so did his beautiful wife — for beautiful she is. A little pause took place; I believe it was expected that I would not conclude the shaking of hand there; but something, I know not what, restrained me — I did not even look towards the seat where Miss Saville was. Her rising drew my eye; I did not presume to anticipate her intention, though sensible of it. She put out her hand, — she attempted to speak, — her voice failed;

— I took the hand, — I held it, — I supported her back to her seat ; but I had a sufficient command of myself not to betray, by my hand, the *transient* folly of my heart, which would have led me to devour her's with kisses. My reward was already disproportioned, and I wished no greater.

We recovered ourselves by degrees ; the day was fine ; I accompanied the party through the house and over the grounds. Saville's feelings were frequently on the point of overpowering him ; but his strength of mind, and affection for his daughter, bore him up. Our business was soon transacted, and called for little attention. Our tables had their best sauce, pleasant conversation ; and the evening produced a treat unequalled in my annals of music. She went of her own accord, or by her father's desire, to try the organ, and of *her own accord* continued to harmonize sounds, which I would not have exchanged for St. Cecilia's own ; and, indeed, I could not but compare them with those immortalized in Dryden's ode :

**“ The sweet enthusiast from her sacred store,
Enlarged the former narrow bounds,
And added length to solemn sounds,
With Nature’s mother-wit, and arts unknown before.”**

It is a common observation, that the organ is peculiarly adapted to solemn sounds; and the swelling them into length constitutes one of the finest effects of that divine instrument. I never heard tones so exquisitely prolonged, swelled, and diminished; and well might those lines come into my mind from the “sacred store of the enthusiast.”

Enthusiasm is as amiable when it is unaffected, as it is ridiculous when performed for the occasion. The miss from school, who begins to swell her chest with a deep inspiration at some particular note marked by her Italian master, and at the same time throws emotion into her eyes, shoulders, sideling cheek, and out-stretched neck, may be called an enthusiast by her papa, and thought a fine singer by her mamma; but all her title to enthusiasm and fine singing only amounts to a preparation for your Vortex. Affectation and vanity spoil every thing; nature and modesty

exalt every thing. That Miss Saville felt as she sung and played I rather heard than saw, as my tribute to her perfection was paid by my ear rather than by my tongue. We none of us requested particular pieces. She volunteered her own store by ear, and sung some exquisite Roman anthems and chants to Latin words. I felt something like sympathetic enthusiasm: the sounds and the words together thrilled to my heart; and, if I had not known that heart incapable of love, I should in those moments have taken it to task. This is no contradiction to my proffered oath; the heart may love, that may not ever be in love. There *was* a momentary *something*, Vernon, but it passed uncomprehended and unexamined — let it pass. With my sensations, the fine Italian tones and Latin articulations combined thoughts that absorbed me in the catholicism of Rome. Have the Catholics erred in enlisting the senses on the side of their religion? Who ever thought of forming a heaven without music? Olympus had its Apollo. The harmony of vibration is bewitching.

— If the angel converts me, it must be with an almsgiving of love. The melodious vibration of her voice must dethrone Israel's vindictive, passionate Jehovah, and come to my heart a loving deity.

When I take up the pen, my dear Vernon, to write to you, restrained of confidence in every other direction, it seems to demand, and take compensation, in sucking a treble quantity of paper; and it is now struggling with me to give language to images and reflections, which my nerves call upon me to deny. I cannot bear it; the veil must still remain untraced, even though I approach and shake it.

The day closed; — it was the happiest of my life; — it was the only happy day of my life, counting mental life to begin at the entrance upon manhood. Some days of boyish happiness — BLISS — I do remember; but it followed me not into the portion of my existence when life matures; — and its duration too was even more transient than my boyhood: — the syrup poisoned before it cloyed. Away — Some happiness I felt also on the day I

was accidentally led into the wood between St. Germain and Poissy ; but it was not unmixed. I have since thought with pleasure of what I had the good fortune to do that day ; but I could seriously give myself no credit for what any other man so situated must have done ; — these were momentary vibrations. The 26th of October was to me a day of uninterrupted happiness.

It closed : — the party were conducted to their respective chambers ; I attended Mr. Saville to his myself.

When you think of the sad tale I told you, the scenes of which Fate had laid at Grove Park and Belmont Lodge, you will allow that Saville's fortitude had no slight trial to undergo on his return to the abode of his ancestors and of his own youth. It had encountered the struggle, and had borne it manfully. My accompanying him to his room was to take leave of him, and to say all I could to make him comfortable in the renewed possession of his estate. I believe he loves me ; I appeared to him, what I felt in myself, an agent of good. He was

surprised at my determination of leaving the house early in the morning, and endeavoured to make me change it; but, upon my conjuring him not to make it a point which left me no alternative, he desisted from urging me. He begged that we might form a friendship, and assured me that his nephew was anxious to be included in it. I was sensible of this being truly an honour, and I said so; but I pleaded my solitary habits, and my resolution of visiting other countries for some years. He kindly said that the only thing wanting to complete his happiness was to know that I was happy. We shook hands. I commissioned him with an apology to the Godfreys, and, wishing him a good night, retired to a chamber which had been made ready for me. Here ended the day, and my happiness.

Alone in my room, my reflections continued to flow agreeably. I was pleased with myself, as the author and agent of the happiness I foresaw at Grove Park, and of which I had witnessed the commencement; I did not however flatter myself

that there was much virtue in the act that produced it, and which you say you envy me, for it costs me little; but, being one which I might have avoided without reproach, it stands perhaps higher than that which restored a daughter. The fact is, and I cannot but express it to you, my dear Vernon, that I delighted that night in contemplating both, and it prolonged the enjoyment of the day in a certain degree; but it was no longer happiness—of what avail is it to me? thought I: will it:

“ Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow;
Raze out the written troubles of the brain;
And cleanse the bosom of that perilous stuff,
Which weighs upon the heart?”

My thoughts grew melancholy, and, as my cheek touched my pillow, I said in the words of the same divine physician of a mind diseased—“Is there no
“sweet oblivious antidote?” My unhappy spirit answered, none, none that thou can'st take. I addressed myself to sleep, but found it not—St. Cecilia chased it from all the chambers of my

brain — her organ filled my ear — her voice filled my heart — I could not sleep — I should see her no more — My horses were ordered at daylight — I had not bid her farewell — I had not said or looked thanks for my day of happiness — but that I knew before, for I had planned it. It was rudeness — it was affected singularity of self-restraint — it was contemptible — why not take leave in the common way? It was done, and it was too late to undo it. — Unhappy, inconsistent, blundering Darrell! Such were my concluding reflections, as I at last forgot myself in broken, unconnected visions — now passing with wings like one of Milton's angels to the sun, now racing with a tiger on an open plain — then stemming a torrent, and again raising myself from the ground on wings.

These agitated slumbers were terminated by the noise Morris made as he opened my windows according to the order he had received. It was one of the finest autumn mornings I ever saw. This was the last day on which I could use the freedom of acting at Grove Park.

as I listed. I was accustomed — don't think me mad, I am not so yet — to perform an occasional solemn sacrifice in the bower at the extremity of the grounds, near that part of the park wall, where a small gate opens on the turf which skirts the high road, and whither I sent the horses to wait for me.

Sacrifice! Yes, sacrifice — it is the romance of my character — surely if I put up with the false horrors, invented and imputed by the innate malignity of my species, I may indulge that slight degree of insanity which discredits not the understanding in bringing fancy to the aid of feeling, of — Yes, sacrifice. But in leading you to the altar it is with no intention to admit you into the sanctuary — I am no longer on the spot, and I have already told you that my nerves forbid another undrawing of the curtain. It is not that I would shut my heart to you, Vernon; No, not its inmost recess; I only keep its blood from gushing out upon you.

The twilight of the morning was turning its gray to azure, when Morris opened

the hall door and let me pass into the garden. In advancing down the broad walk from the door, I twice stopped to contemplate the house. That was Saville's room, there reposed the virtuous Godfreys,—in the middle was the drawing-room where St. Cecilia's vocal frame had awakened solemn raptures in my heart, and in the chamber next to it she slept herself. Twice had I gazed—I was about to gaze a third time; but if a third, why not a fourth? a fifth? when would it end? I gazed not at phantoms like Banquo's issue. I might cry "start eyes!" but how could I ever add, "I'll look no more?" I accused myself of folly, and proceeded. I entered the bower; I stood at the altar; I was absorbed in the performance of its rites, when I was roused from my trance by the scream of a female, masked by the shrubs, but close to the spot. I darted to the place—pale, trembling, and supporting herself against a tree, I saw—her, whom of all beings else upon earth, I would at that moment have avoided.—'Twas chance, 'twas fate; she said 'twas Providence that

led her thither. A brutal doubt that curiosity might have been her leader—a doubt that I ought to be damned for—enflamed a momentary madness, a savage coarseness of expression—the new terror overcame her, and she threw herself on her knees. Oh! Vernon, I felt at that moment that my heart had not lost its early tenderness—I was what I had been.—I seized her hands—I raised her on her feet, which refusing to bear her, I was not master enough of myself to take any other way of supporting her, but by pressing her to my heart. I would have kept her on it till she was completely revived; but the unexpected pressure gave her strength to disengage herself in a moment.

An explanation took place.—I needed it not, but I heard it to satisfy her. Being early awake, and tempted by the morning as the sun was about to rise, she had unconsciously taken the path which led to the bower. At the moment of her arriving at the spot where I found her, she perceived me through the branches of the trees, and imagining from some mo-

tion of my hand, that I was about to terminate my character with suicide, she gave the scream which produced our agitated interview. The veil of my sanctuary hung loose and partly undrawn; but she entered not — I would have undrawn it quite, but she would not — She ruled — never was human being worthier of rule — To be ignorant was her wish, and ignorant she remains; but at parting she convinced me that she had no other thought of me, but how to give me a soul, and to save it. She half persuaded me that I was immortal; and I gave her a solemn promise to try to persuade myself the other half. She had completely recovered herself-possession: I on the contrary found I was again losing mine, or rather the portion of it she had awakened me to. I resolved to fly: my parting was like an arrow from its bow; I left her standing alone in the bower: quick as thought I was on my horse — I was at Belmont.

You admonished me in gaiety to dust a Bible and display it on my table; how much more powerful must that admo-

nisher be, who determined me to enter upon a new study of it! Stare if you please — I am now, as I told you, studying my Bible seriously. I say *seriously*, because I cannot deny that wit, and drollery, and ridicule are the instruments only of Fancy: the instrument of Truth is not formed to tickle; mathematicians are not laughing monsters. So I have opened the Bible with all due seriousness; but I seriously own to you also, that my search is unsuccessful, and that every new page I turn assures me that this book will not prove the instrument of my conversion. I asked my admonisher for a GOD OF LOVE. My religion can have no other God. The natural world seems to proclaim a God, with some exceptions — the moral world, if not the work of chance, must be the work of an evil author. I cannot be a Manichean. If there were two creative spirits, one good and one bad, the former must be the Eternal Being. I have some notion of virtue, but I see so little of it, and that little so compounded with heterogeneous and poisonous in-

redients, that I cannot help considering it as a fanciful essence, which the imagination has extracted by double and treble refinement and rectification, to be corked up for occasional sentimental intoxication. If this extract were indeed the *substantial essence* of man, adorning all his thought, and directing all his actions, I should exclaim, not that he ought to be, but that he necessarily is immortal, by the irrevocable fiat of his Creator. As things are, if there were an immortality, it must be an immortality of damnation: for the existence of one or two such beings as I have lately been contemplating can make no more difference in the general mass of corruption, than would three pure drops of crystal water in whitening the vial of ink before me. Be this as it may, while hope and credulity at best make a possible future, there is nothing wanted to convince us that there is a damnable present.

I would say something more of Mrs. Godfrey, not to please you, but to keep you at a little distance from the hottest part of this Tartarus. You

must take your fate — for fate it is, in spite of the beautiful preacher, who talks of guardian-angels, and who would be one too, to a being very unworthy of her solicitude, were not Fate against it. You see her perhaps daily. Molest not her peace with the mention of so wretched a creature as I am; breathe not to her a supposition that I love her, for love her as you would mean, I do not. Say not a word to her of Lady Betty, unless it be to assure her that my meeting her at Malvern was accidental; insinuate nothing about her; though gone, let her take her chance; rather keep her up in Lady Mount-Vernon's opinion, who, I know from yourself, is as backward in listening to slander as firm in excluding vice. If you have a fair opportunity, let Miss Saville know how I have been occupied; but beware of saying I bade you. Do not say that I am unhappy, or gloomy, or any thing that would make her uneasy. Bear with me, Vernon, if I grow too serious for you — there is an unaccountable weight at my heart — if my pride forsake me, I am gone. To

desire, esteem, and at the same time to be conscious of unworthiness — to love, and to know that all the avenues of love are for ever choked with horrors — to compare a damnable **THUS I AM**, with a blessed **THUS I MIGHT HAVE BEEN** — if aught can give a maddening influence to the fibres of the brain, it must be the visions of so forlorn a being.

Let me hear from you soon, *very soon* — your letters are the only support my spirits have at present — 'Thank you! 'thank you!

Ever yours,

F. DARRELL.

LETTER XXXVI.

Augusta to Angelica.

Manor House, Dec.

ABOUT a fortnight ago, my dearest Angelica, I sent you a packet of a letter, and have been daily looking for one from you, and daily disappointed: if I have it not soon I shall be extremely uneasy. I have been quiet hitherto, because I know, that, had you been ill, my dear Marchesa would have written for you. I impute the delay to some unfortunate cause which is no way important but as one cannot trace it, and I will still exert my patience.

The peculiar interest of my last letter, Angelica, so engaged my mind, that I had filled a volume before I was aware that a thousand things remained for me to say, which it was impossible for me to add to it without losing the opportu-

nity I had of sending it to you by a safe hand. I will now resume my pen and endeavour to make amends.

Although some particulars of what I have to communicate of my residence in Herefordshire took place previous to our leaving it for Grove Park, yet I will first conclude my account of our stay in Northamptonshire, as a continuation of my last letter, particularly as there is but little to add. The abrupt departure of Sir Francis Darrell gave us all great pain, and this was increased by the impression he had left that he was unhappy, and that calumny had exaggerated in a tenfold degree, whatever was really his demerit, while Fame was silent or indolent, on the meritorious side; of his character. Why is it, Angelica, that evil is loudly trumpeted to our ears, and good in general left for us to discover? Is it that the malignant passions are more prevalent than the benignant ones? or more turbulent and noisy? Or is it that praise is considered as superfluous to natural goodness, and is only called forth when goodness is the result of

effort? The silent, the unnoised, unrecorded acts of goodness of Sir Francis Darrell broke suddenly upon us at almost every turn we took in the vicinity of Grove Park—round Belmont—in Peterborough. What do I say?—silent and unnoised they may be,—but not unrecorded; no, Angelica, they cannot be unrecorded,—and he that bears record will reward;—the spirit of goodness will interpose in favour of all good, and find the means of washing off all stains from the voluntary agents of it.—Yes, he will be wholly persuaded,—not by me, I am too weak an instrument,—but by that divine ally who succours the good, and never succours in vain.

In some hour of leisure when we are settled at Grove Park, I will make the country around it the subject of a letter; and you will find Sir Francis Darrell the friend of the agriculturist, of the manufacturer, of the tradesman. Immediately around his estate every cottage sends forth smiles, and poverty is not abject. He associates with the rich distantly, by mutual impulse; he is better known

to the poor ; — the former are said to distrust his principles ; among the latter he has never been known to draw a tear either of sorrow or of shame : — the sons of his tenants would fly to arms at his wish, and their daughters do not blush at his praise. There is one instance of his anger spoken of among them ; — a young farmer, who had succeeded to the occupation of his father's farm, the lease of which was newly expired, had gained the affections of a neighbour's daughter ; but, on becoming master, he looked for a better dowry, and forsook the girl. This reached the ear of Sir Francis, who immediately sent him notice to quit the farm he held, at the end of six months ; and nothing could appease his anger till the girl herself granted her lover's pardon on his sincere repentance. Sir Francis settled them on the farm, and the young man proves a good husband ; perhaps the better from a sense of his ambitious folly.

Such is the man at home, whom the greater circle of society combine to mark

as lost to virtue and religion. — And, alas! I must own that the sentence does not appear to have passed without some grounds. He never once mentioned the name of Bramblebear, which was the confirmation of consciousness, and on our journey my eyes had already confirmed report. — Add the secret of some dreadful nature which preys upon his heart. — After this, Angelica, I can have no hope that he is as pure and exalted as I could wish to have found him. But is pureness not renewable? Is the ascent once abandoned no more attainable? Whatever the answer to these questions may be among those who call themselves unspotted, we know an authority, my dear sister, on which a better hope rests. This I own to you I do cherish — his solemn promise when he left me, and the blessings of his tenantry are solid earnest of success.

As it was not the intention of the family to stay at Grove Park, for the present we received no visits; but the usual civilities of neighbourhood were paid and returned by compliments and

enquiries, and hopes of future intimacy. We remained while the fine weather lasted, making short excursions, and returning at the close of the day. We went to see Belmont Lodge: — it is a truly magnificent seat, and we returned several times to view its beauties, it being impossible to see them on one day. I must not attempt to describe it to you at present: — you shall have it in the spring, when we are to return to settle in Northamptonshire; though my father already talks of taking another look at Grove Park, and I see that we shall be flying backwards and forwards in spite of the winter.

Think not that I have ceased ejaculating — “Oh that Angelica were with me!” Oh no! never will the wish or the exclamation cease: — it is at my heart, and will make its way to my lips. I love Caroline, but I want Angelica. I saw more of my lovely cousin’s mind and temper during the week of our family party solitude, than I had before been able to estimate. She is truly good, and the affection between her and George delightful; — it is at

once an attachment of the heart and of the understanding: it is not displayed to the world, but it is not concealed from friendship like ours. Were young Dartford such a man as George, possessed of sense to guide his feelings, and of feelings that could be constant, it is not impossible that I might think upon the subject his worthy mother had at heart. — but of this I shall write presently: let us first take leave of Grove Park.

Though so many years had passed away, many of the young people of my father's time, now growing into years, remembered him well, and came to the house to testify their remembrance and respect. It delighted me to find that several could trace my mother in me: — how wonderful, but not more wonderful than similar traces throughout the works of God. — Not immortal! Oh! how canst thou be so blind? — Not you, my dear Angelica; — it is not to you that this spontaneous exclamation is addressed, but to the imagined spirit of the unhappy man who occupies so much of my thoughts. — To be immortal, and not to know it! Life

is odious to him : — there he is consistent : — to be happy without the conviction of immortality, is the bliss of an insect sporting in the sun. — Oh ! he is no insect : — why will he not know his prerogative ! Amiable, weak, noble, unworthy Darrell ! My enthusiasm will, in spite of me, lead me away : — you will partake of it, Angelica, and not wonder at your Augusta ; — above all, you will not ascribe it to a passion with which my heart is, and will probably remain all my life, unacquainted ; — and you may be equally assured, my dear Angelica, that nothing of that nature is in his heart. — Though why need I say this to you, who know me so well ?

I think I am a long time bringing you from Grove Park, of which I had so little to add : — I was writing about the people who remembered us. —

But I must not forget to tell you that Sir Francis Darrell left Belmont Lodge on the very same day that he went away from Grove Park, leaving me alone in that bower where he had so much alarmed me for his life. I tell you this, be-

cause you will naturally suppose, after the manner of his departure from us, that we should not have gone to the Lodge had he remained there. I must also tell you that he did not go to join Mr. Falstaff and Mr. Bramblebear at Cheltenham, which I know will give you pleasure, as it did me, but directly to his house in London, where his friend Mr. Vernon tells me he has remained ever since.

With respect to the good people I was telling you of: my father engaged two good-tempered pleasing-looking women to go immediately into the house to take care and keep it in order during our absence, promising to retain them in our service, on our return. Several pleasant recollections took place; none painful were alluded to:—but if I were to indulge our passion for detail, my dear Angelica, I see that I should not get back to Manor House before Christmas;—so let us go there at once.

We have now, my dear sister, to retrace time, and take up my narrative at our first arrival in Herefordshire, from

Woodlee. We met with a kind and distinguished reception from George's numerous friends; but I shall confine myself at present to some account of Mrs. Dartford, and of the Mount-Vernon family. I endeavoured to amuse you in a letter written soon after my arrival at Paris, with some account of our rencontre with a romantic youth of the name of Dartford, the enthusiastic admirer of Rousseau, and discoverer of a strong resemblance in me to the virtuous heroine of his romance. I know you have since become personally acquainted with him. His inconsiderate, abrupt declaration of a passion for me, I regarded as the effect of a gay disposition, and after the manner of parting with him, I gave it no further thought. It appears, however, that he is very serious, and that I have only to say the word and be Mrs. Dartford. He is a Herefordshire man, and a friend of my cousins. He has a fine old Abbey, a few miles lower down the Wye, called the Priory, where his mother at present resides; and his estate is a very consi-

derable one : — so you see what a lady of fortune I may be if I please.

I cannot tell you how surprised I was when George, laughing, put a letter into my hand, which he had received from Mr. Dartford, dated at Florence. In this letter, which other events and feelings afterwards drove from my recollection for awhile, I found my cousin appointed his advocate in love, with a request that he would inform me of his having abjured the worship of his Geneva idol, and of his being graciously received at Signa by my Pisani. As you know him, you will see that his person and manners, to which you may now add his fortune and connexions, are far from being objectionable; but such general recommendations, however desirable, are not the principles we, my dear sister, have laid down for our conduct in the important change of life I am now solicited to make; and I ought, without the slightest delay, to have requested my cousin to give a positive assurance that I would hear no more on the subject — indeed I did, but his writing has been delayed in consequence of

the strenuous request from Mrs. Dartford herself to him, to give her time to endeavour to win my consent to accept her son. She is an amiable, agreeable, handsome woman. — I saw her very soon after we came down here from Woodlee, and she has gained very much upon me indeed. She is all candour, and possesses great sensibility. — She scrupled not to tell me the weak as well as the worthy part of her son's character, and she owned that she lived in constant anxiety in consequence of the hastiness of his attachments, which had their origin more in vanity than love. She was sure, she said, that I could establish constancy in his heart; and if mine had no other engagement, she conjured me to think of the happiness in my power to bestow, not only upon him, but upon her. She hinted to me too, that his religion was in his favour. I was greatly flattered by the esteem of this excellent mother, and I felt that I could have chosen her for mine, but my choice of a partner for life depended upon considerations to which her son had no

claim ; and I have again, since my return from Grove Park, assured her, with all the affection and delicacy the occasion required, that I could not become her daughter-in-law, but that in every other respect I should be happy to consider her as a mother, and to possess her friendship through life. My declaration cost her some tears, but she soon wiped them away, blessing me, and saying that she should always look upon me as her child. My cousin has written to her son, kindly but positively — and directed his letter, as desired by him, to Rome.

I am sorry he has left Florence, as I should have commissioned you, with the assistance of the Marchese and Marchesa, to give him some friendly admonitions. I cannot help thinking of him for the sake of his dear mother, who loves him with a doating fondness. I must tell you that George and Mrs. Dartford were not his only ambassadors. — I was a good deal surprised to find his suit advocated by Sir Francis Darrell's friend, whom I mentioned to you in my last, Mr. Vernon, a lively, pleasant young man, who enter-

ed upon his office with declaring that it was the last thing in the world he would have undertaken, had his own heart not been fortunately defended by a shield of seven folds, the last of brass. I listened to all he had to say, and I was amused and pleased with the manner in which he pointed out dear Mrs. Dartford's arguments—but it was clear he pleaded more for the mother than the son;—and I had nearly asked him which of the two he would have me marry, when I recollected that neither her feelings nor the subject should be treated ludicrously.

When he paused, I told him that he had in general expressed sentiments very similar to my own; that I loved Mrs. Dartford; and that I thought it extremely desirable that his friend should be settled with a good wife; and I did not deny that marriages on trust might prove happy, but said that, for my own part, I was of opinion that what was called the passion of love, by which I meant a congeniality of mind, was necessary, and that I not only thought it the height of imprudence to take upon trust the chief ingredient of

a happy marriage, but more, that it was sinful, and deserved punishment if it did not always receive it. He good humouredly gave up the cause, saying with a smile, that he found he had undertaken a dangerous duty, and was afraid that his sevenfold shield had not proved so impenetrable as he had boasted. This young man has a tone of gallantry which suits his air and manners, and he is allowed a kind of right to it, his compliments being considered as words of course ; but I am not sure that it is not a dangerous privilege ; for words of course are often pleasant words, “ and a flattering mouth worketh ruin.”

I must now think of concluding my letter with some account of the Mount-Vernon family, with whom my cousins are very intimate. Lord Mount-Vernon's chief estate lies in this county, and is known by the appellation of his title. He is about George's age ; their fathers were intimate before them, and the attachment has descended, not only in private harmony, but in public connection. Notwithstanding this, their pursuits and

tastes vary considerably — in essential opinions and moral sentiments they accord — they have therefore that friendship for each other arising from this broad foundation of esteem — not that exquisite friendship, that true solace of life, in which esteem is mixed with a tenderness that looks at faults and failings through an inverted tube, while, in the other direction, it magnifies ordinary goodness into great virtues.

His Lordship is a decided sportsman both in hunting and shooting, but intelligent, informed, and a perfect gentleman in his manners. — He has a pack of hounds and other dogs, but they are kept in their proper places.

You have no idea, my dear Angelica, of the rage for hunting and for riding that prevails in this country — the ladies all ride, and some hunt. — George and Caroline, though no hunter and huntress, both ride well, and are giving me lessons. — He has made me a present of a beautiful little Arabian, trained to perfect gentleness. In the country riding is absolutely a necessary accomplishment —

there are many pleasant by-roads through which carriages cannot pass, and the exercise in the cold weather, which is begun, is more agreeable than that of a carriage. — I believe I shall be a horse-woman, but never a huntress — a qualification only wanting to make Lord Mount-Vernon almost as gallant to me as his brother. He has a female cousin, Lady Barbara Lewis, a daughter of the late Earl Casselton, of whose company he is extremely fond, and who invariably passes the hunting season with him. She is a female Nimrod; a Diana, if you like the comparison better — she rides with a boldness beyond conception, and is as firm upon her horse as the huntsman that directs the pack. I have seen her hunter leap over a high gate with her on his back, and continue a fleet pace like a greyhound. — I could not help expressing my wonder that she did not break her neck.

“ Law! my dear,” said she, “ it’s all habit — we are all what we are by habit. Mount-Vernon takes a flying leap, just as Lewy Vernon there turns a compliment

or a joke, by habit. — Your cousin Caroline goes to church by habit, and you go to mass by habit — just as one is brought up. — I heard you were a Roman Catholic, my dear; I don't like you the worse for that. — Some of the best of us I think are Catholics; Mrs. Dartford for one, and a better woman does not breathe, if it were not for that fly-away son of her's, who plagues her to death with offering himself to every pretty girl he meets — but that is just as he was brought up — all comes from French and Italian reading, my dear. — It is not natural to an Englishman. — He should have been whipped out of the habit when a boy; or as he grew a man, sent to leap over hedges with me; I warrant his flying at hearts would all have turned to flying at gates; and he had better break his own neck than his poor mother's heart."

Lady Barbara has a flow of this kind of language, which is usually accompanied with a gentle and pleasant laugh, and no one ever thinks of interrupting her, or confuting her opinions, except now and then her cousin Lewis, that is Mr. Ver-

non, for an occasional display of rhodomontade.

Of Mr. Vernon I have already said enough to make you acquainted with his character. — He seems agreeable to every body — he hunts and shoots with his brother and Lady Barbara ; talks politics, law, and poetry, with George ; sings with a guitar to Lady Mount-Vernon ; and sometimes to Caroline and me ; and plays cards when he is wanted. He is a good deal at Manor House, and through him we occasionally hear of Sir Francis Darrell. — I like him ; he enlivens without fatiguing the spirits ; and, as I am myself rather of the serious tribe of damsels, the mixture of our dispositions agree very well. — Caroline also likes him, but I see she is sometimes afraid of being too well liked of him, and therefore forces me between her and him in those light attentions and freedoms that follow on social intimacy.

But the flower of the Mount-Vernon family is not of their blood. — Lady Mount-Vernon was a Miss Dundas, the

daughter of a gentleman originally of a Scotch family, who, being a younger brother, had been provided for by an Indian cadetship. — He had quitted the military service, and honourably amassed a small fortune while yet a young man; part of it he brought home, part he left in India, to receive a greater interest for it. Content with little, he resolved to return no more to India, and entered into a love-marriage, which for years was a happy one. — He lost his wife and then his fortune, at least that part of it left in India, in consequence of an unexpected bankruptcy. It affected him greatly, and he died himself soon after.

Miss Dundas was the only child that survived him. — She was grown a young woman, rationally instructed, but without what is called the brilliant accomplishments. Her mother had been intimately known to the Marchioness of N**, who, learning that Mr. Dundas had nearly consumed the part of the fortune brought from India, and that there was a bare pittance left for the support of his or-

phan daughter, offered her an asylum under her roof, with a view of mutually benefiting her and her own children, by the good sense she found in her. A merited affection reciprocally encreased daily. She was soon considered as an invaluable treasure, and the masters engaged for the family were employed to give her those accomplishments which had been before out of the reach of her father's purse.

Handsome and admired, the Marchioness well knew that she must be either entirely secluded, or run the gauntlet of all the coxcombs of her acquaintance. — She warned her of her situation, and saw that she could have the greatest dependance upon her prudence. It was as she foresaw — they all worshipped, but none were serious. She stood in a painful situation, and the amiable Marchioness resolved to make those desist who could not be made serious; accordingly she pitched upon Lord Mount-Vernon, who had been the most open in his admiration, and the most strenuous in his endeavours to gain her affection.

"My Lord," said the Marchioness, "I give you your choice, declare yourself openly the honourable suitor of my ward, or relieve me from the pain of seeing you trifling with the happiness of a person whom I love, and whom I know to deserve all the esteem your Lordship can bestow upon her."

He wisely chose the former alternative, and Miss Dundas, not without some reasoning, and more persuasion of her noble friends, became Lady Mount-Vernon.

Here now, Angelica, is one of the exceptions to my general rule, that a *congeniality of mind is necessary to make marriage happy*. The unceasing love, esteem, and gentleman-like attentions of her lord, have brought her not only to bear with his dissonance of taste, as a duty, but even to receive pleasure in his enjoyment of a species of delight which, independent of him, she can neither relish nor approve. She seems to listen with glee to his and Lady Barbara's reports of the field, and oc-

casionally delights him with questions, put merely for that purpose. On the other hand, he is sensible of her merit, and I think happiness may be said to find an abode at Mount-Vernon. She is blessed with a sweet, even temper, and is said never to have known what anger is. — She is not angry even with those who merit reproach, but firm in keeping them at a distance. At the same time she is so averse to magnifying offences, that she runs into the contrary extreme, and you would think her the advocate of all the faults and errors of human nature. She is lively and fond of society, though possessed of the best resources of solitude, which she indulges by choice, as much as circumstances permit, for that portion of her time which Lord Mount-Vernon devotes to hunting, and that is a considerable part of the year, both before and after Christmas. I have myself experienced a frankness in her disposition that charms me.

Among other subjects, she has spoken very freely on the character of Sir Fran-

cis Darrell. She says she believes it to be a false one, made up of unintelligible shreds of slander ; and that he has more virtue in his soul, than is to be found by the score among the youths of fashion ; that every body talks something, and nobody knows any thing ; — that as to his want of religion, that was truly to be lamented, but it concerned himself alone ; whereas virtues and vices concern every body. This conversation took place one day when I happened to be alone with her, and she had asked me the particulars of the event at Paris. In relating them, I frankly expressed the warmth of my gratitude, and I should imagine this to have led to her favourable observation, did I not know the openness of her mind.

I felt a great desire to know what she thought of his attachment to Lady Betty Bramblebear, but an apprehension of its being ascribed to a weak solicitude restrained me from even alluding to it — but, as if she had guessed my wish for the purpose of gratifying it, she mentioned

it herself as a new blast of the trumpet of slander. On this I thought I might say, "you do not give credit to it then?"

"My love," replied she, "I know Lady Betty; her education was very different from mine, and I think her parents much to blame — but I have frequently conversed with herself; and, unless she is a very great hypocrite, there is no danger of her playing the fool. A married woman in this country has a very delicate part to play in life, and it is not always enough that she acts her part well. — That old hag Slander, with her hundred eyes, ears, and tongues, is ever on the watch to find a *reason*, in default of finding a *fact*. And it is a very good reason with her to accuse a pretty woman of being indifferent to virtue, and of defying her God, that her husband is not so highly endowed, or accomplished as his friend. — I firmly believe this to be the only foundation for the report which is just beginning to circulate, and I do all I can to discountenance

it. I shall certainly continue to receive and visit Lady Betty, when I go to town after Christmas."

There was something in these opinions of Lady Mount-Vernon, that went to my soul. . . Here was another noble mind, coinciding with my father and my cousins in doing at least the justice that was deserved, and on that ground suspending belief on dark and incompatible hearsays. You see, my dear Angelica, and I do not deny it, how glad I should be to find every stain washed away from the real character of my preserver; but I also own that I was by no means satisfied with this charitable woman's defence of Lady Betty, and I felt some pain at her resolution to continue an intimacy with her — yet why I should have felt it, I do not well know, for I was aware that George and Caroline meant to do the same.

Here I put my letter by, meaning to add to it occasionally, while waiting the

arrival of yours, and at length I am delighted with a sight of your hand, and tidings from Signa, dear Signa. But how seldom is pleasure unmixed ! The very first sentence of your letter tells me of a loss. I never have received that which you directed to Paris, and I fear the miscarriage of it is not unconnected with the outrage which was defeated by Sir Francis Darrell. I wish it were possible to recover it, but after so long a time, it is hardly to be hoped. I suspected it from your long silence — my mind is now relieved of its suspense, and the loss is less painful.

Yes, my dearest Angelica, we will endeavour to compensate for absence, by a correspondence cordial and detailed ; and a new delight it certainly is — but not equal to the old. In spite of the happiness I enjoy with my cousins, I often wish I could be transported in my sleep by some good genius, to Signa, and wake in the arms of my sister. May not this be one of the privileges of a higher state ? The very imagination shows the possibi-

lity, the probability of it. Not immortal! Oh perverted reason! Our souls already dart across half a world, in spite of our "bodies terrestrial:" what will they not do in our "celestial bodies," when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality? But even as we are, Angelica, our bodies as well as our souls must, though more slowly, pass to Signa and to Grove Park, with or without husbands as Heaven pleases, for such as we can choose will be of our minds. — But there is no thought of the kind at present in my mind — and how mistaken are you in your conjecture, that your Augusta is already surrounded with lovers! — Not one, Angelica, not a single Englishman has ever honoured me so far, except one; and how could I ever have suspected my friend, my sister, my Angelica of robbing me of that one?

Dear Mrs. Dartford! If she knew you, my dear sister, she would not be less solicitous to make you her daughter-in-law, than she was to make me so, but I

fear with similar success — I feel for her — this new change will encrease her anxiety, and he will no doubt write to her upon the subject, if he has not done it already — at all events I think myself bound to communicate to her that part of your letter ; she will be pleased with the manner in which you write, and I will not close this till I am able to tell you how she receives the intelligence. — Before I proceed I must remove your mistake in supposing me his first love — indeed, not by a dozen at least.

To much of your dear letter you will find the answer anticipated, in what I have written before I received it, particularly the subject of Grove Park and Belmont ; — a great deal too respecting your impression of the character of Sir Francis Darrell. All the passages of your letter respecting him, especially after you received mine from Woodlee, are sweetly consonant with my own feelings. Your conviction that I am not a weak enamoured girl — your enthusiastic contemplation of him, your admiration and

love for those actions known to us — your approbation of my gratitude — your distinction of his virtues not being casual — your inclination to judge from what you know, not from what you are to know — your horror at shutting the door against a return to the paths of wisdom, and your means of widening the narrow gate of Heaven, are all delicious effusions, and warm the correspondent chambers of my heart. And above all do I unite with you in the heaven-inspired hope, that he may soon meet with some worthy man of equally strong intellect who shall convince and convert him.

He talks of going abroad — if he stops at Florence, he must be introduced to our dear Abate Cèvello. If he does not go abroad, and you come to England, will it be possible to prevail upon the Abate to accompany you? He is one of those men whose mildness and good sense add force to truth. Think of this, Angelica. Your certainty that I have made no impression, no dangerous impression upon Sir Francis Darrell, em-

boldens me more in this language ; for if I thought that I had made such an impression, I would be most cautious how I gave way to any degree of enthusiasm about him. No, my dear sister, I have made no such impression upon him — when he talked to me it was of esteem, not of love ; and indeed his whole conduct shows that I have made that impression, and no other. Had it been otherwise, would he not have taken the opportunity he had on the morning he left me so abruptly ? Or would he desert Belmont Lodge, and resolve to go abroad ? No, my dear Angelica, love, as I told you, is not the passion on either side. — I am glad of *his* esteem, and I may indulge *my* gratitude.

I ought, as you say, to rejoice that this is so clear, for I have never seen a man whom I should have so much pain in refusing, and refuse him I certainly should, for the reason you give ; that, though he does not deride, he does not embrace those truths on which alone a lasting engagement can be formed.

There is one thing in his conduct which particularly gratifies me. I told you that he promised me to turn his thoughts seriously to a revision of his opinions on religion. I find his promise was not words of course : his friend Mr. Vernon assures me, that he secludes himself in his library in London, and is at this very time engaged in religious studies. You know not how ardently I pray daily for his success in finding the truth. This proves his esteem for me, but nothing more.

Your account of Olivastro and the Contessa gives me much pain. From what you tell me, I can no longer suspect the Count of being in Paris at the time I was ; but to whom else to impute such an act, Heaven only knows. I cannot help thinking Gaza knew something of it, but my mind entirely acquits his wife. Count Olivastro's coming to England will be extremely annoying. Let it be prevented, if possible. The family, I fear, could not in decency refuse to show him civility.

* * * * *

It is now my turn, Angelica, to ask you, how I shall send you my laugh on paper. I was going to conclude my letter with a half serious, half jesting advice and petition, that you would give Mr. Dartford's proposal some reflection, meaning then to go and pay his mother a visit, when Caroline sent for me to hear some news of Mr. Vernon's. I warrant it is no news to you. I thought what he had to say was respecting Mr. Dartford's passion for *you*. No such thing, and before tidings of your being in possession of his heart arrive, comes a letter from him to his mother seraphizing the beauty, the voice, and the virtues of—whom do you think? But you know Clementina Belvoce of Rome, poor girl! I wish she may have virtue enough to refer him to his mother, but I fear it, and what a daughter for Mrs. Dartford! At first we were a little merry at this young man's expense, but my heart grew heavy on thinking of his mother. Beg the

Marchese to write to Signor Belvoce, and, at least, prevent a precipitate marriage.

A thousand loves. You shall soon have more of the diary of

Your

AUGUSTA.

P. S. I have seen Mrs. Dartford; she said she wished her son had been constant to you.

LETTER XXXVII.

John Dartford, Esq. to Mrs. Dartford.

Rome.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

I AM now arrived at the most renowned city of the whole globe — Rome! once the mistress of the world, and nursery of the most splendid virtues! The nursery of the greatest men of every kind! What are the Alfieris, the Dantes, the Tassos of modern Tuscany, compared to Maro, to Flaccus, to Terentius? What the Medecis to Augustus? The Guicciardinis, Davilas, Machiavels to Livius, to Sallustius, to Marcus Tullius? To be sure, in architecture, painting, sculpture, and music, Rome still stands the foremost of cities; though, in spite of the grandeur of St. Peter's, the Pantheon possesses superior attractions for me. It is usually

called the Rotunda, but is now the church of Santa Maria ad Martyres.

I have not time to describe it to you, having something still more interesting to impart; for there it was, my dear mother, that I first heard the melodious and gently swelling tones of Clementina Belvoce's voice. Oh! how shall I describe her to you! It was her voice that first attracted my particular notice. I became acquainted with the family on my arrival at Rome, having brought a letter to Signor Belvoce, her father, from a Marchese Pisani of Florence, whose family were very civil to me while I was there, but whom I have no reason to thank for their subsequent conduct.

The beauty of Clementina did not strike me so powerfully till I heard her joining in an anthem. I was standing by her; the voice that struck my ear was that of a seraph. I looked at her, and found that the face was also that of a seraph. She is the most lovely creature, in person and mind, I ever met with. How I deserve to be so fortunate as to be agreeable to this divine Signorina,

I know not, but I am the happiest of men; at least I shall be so as soon as your letter arrives in answer to this, for Signor Belvoce would have us wait for that.

I shall say nothing disrespectful of this signor. It was very natural for him to write to the Marchese di Pisani about me, and to make as many enquiries as he pleased. Yet it was not so gentleman-like in the Marchese to advise him to ascertain affairs in England. I referred to my banker, and to our ministers here and at Florence, but, by Pisani's advice, he says I must hear from you first.

I know very well what actuates Pisani, — it is mere jealousy. I paid some civilities to his daughter, which he would have turned into a courtship. — By-the-bye, I meant to write to you about her, but it went out of my head. I must own she is a very *nice* girl, but I had not then seen Signorina Clementina Belvoce.

This brings to my mind that Signorina Pisani is the friend of a Miss Saville, whom I met at Geneva, a cousin of Mr. Godfrey's of Manor-House. Indeed I

wrote both to him and to you about her. I thought *her* a *very nice* girl, but I had not then seen either Signorina Pisani or Signorina Clementina Belvoce; and she was so peculiar in her notions, and Godfrey so tardy and cold, that my pride soon overcame a partiality which had taken no deep root. If they still entertain any ideas about me, pray put a stop to them; and by no means let them imagine that I am at all mortified, but give my compliments to them in a friendly cool way.

Write, I conjure you, the moment you receive this. Meanwhile I shall take a run to Naples, and be back again to receive your letter here. I write in a hurry, it would be quite unnatural if I did not; but you know my heart. It is that of

Your affectionate son,

JOHN DARTFORD.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.



